WRECKAGE

J·HARTLEY MANNERS

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WRECKAGE

BY THE SAME AUTHOR

"Peg O' My Heart"

A novel founded by Mr. Manners on his Comedy of Youth of the same title.

Happiness and Other Plays

WRECKAGE

A DRAMA IN THREE ACTS

BY

J. HARTLEY MANNERS

WITH A PREFACE BY

CHARLES B. TOWNS

NEW YORK
DODD, MEAD AND COMPANY
1916

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DEDICATION

To all those in this great country who have fallen victim to the Drug-Habit and think there is no hope of freedom, and to the millions who run the risk daily of *forming* the Drug-Habit I dedicate this play.

My one object in writing it was to bring light to a curse that has eaten into the life of the nation: to show how the Habit may be contracted: to what depths a human being can fall while under its influence: and the ultimate hope of delivery from the poison when intelligently treated.

I desire it to be an arraignment of the conditions that brought about the evil: an exposition of its effect on human life: and a message of hope to those who have become victims to it.

THE AUTHOR.

January, 1916.

PREFACE

The occasion of my meeting the author of this striking and unusual play was to me a most pleasing one. One day, some two years ago, I answered a telephone call. At the other end of the line was Mr. Manners. He introduced himself and told me that he had written a one-act play, which was to be produced at a "Gambol" of the Lambs' Club. The play, he said, had to do with the subject of drug-addiction, and on account of the nature of my work and my long acquaintance with the many phases of the drug-habit and the psychological and physiological characteristics of drug-takers, he desired that I should hear the manuscript read before the play was produced, in order that the pathological details of character and action might be absolutely correct. When the manuscript was read to me, I was greatly surprised at the strength of the play. The psychology of drug-addiction had been brought out admirably. I was amazed to see the subject treated with such clear understanding by a man who was not a physician, who had never himself been afflicted with the drug-habit, who had never had any one in his family with such an affliction, and whose dramatic and sociological interest in the subject had been aroused solely by his coming into casual contact with some well-known characters who were drug-takers.

On the evening when the play was produced, I was invited to give an introductory talk on the subject of the drug-habit to the members of the Lambs' Club. This I did, and I predicted at that time that, on account of the fine handling of the subject by the author, we should certainly hear more of this work. I told Mr. Manners that he must not stop there, that he should take up the subject in a broader and more thoroughgoing way. From time to time after this we came together and discussed the matter and all its possibilities. This drama in three acts, bearing the original title of the play produced at the Lambs' Club gambol, is the result.

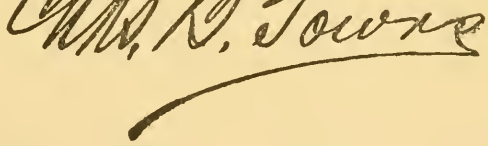
The work comes at the right moment. The subject is of the greatest sociological import and interest at the present time, and the play takes up in a most vivid and practical way the fundamental psychology of the drug-habit.

Every drug-taker, every one interested in any person who takes drugs, every physician, every one concerned in the social welfare of the country, every legislator, every one in the State or Government service, every member of every Board of Health should read this moving drama plucked from the heart of our modern social body. I trust it will find its way into every public library and that preachers and teachers and all those coming into contact with the drug-problem in any of its phases will acquaint themselves with the facts here so strikingly brought out.

In presenting various phases of the habit-forming

drug problem, the author has not overdrawn in the slightest degree or in any detail. There is an abundance of parallel instances in everyday life coming out of the prescribing and administering of drugs in cases of illness. There are many true things in this work to open the eyes of men and women who stand in imminent danger because no one has put them on their guard. Mr. Manners's play is a work of art; that is to say, a presentation of character and an appeal to the emotions through dramatic action; but it also calls out clearly, "Stop! Look! Listen!"

Art is often more effective than the pulpit or the platform, and I believe this play will perform a great sociological service. It will help to make the physician, the druggist, the trained nurse and all who prescribe or administer habit-forming drugs realise more fully their grave responsibility. It will help to safeguard those who are exposed to the danger of having the drug-habit put upon them, and it will suggest to those who are already afflicted the best way to escape from their slavery.



New York,
January 22, 1916.

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WRECKAGE

Begun in 1913. Completed in 1915

"Have you ever given a thought to the outcasts of a city as big as New York? The Wreckage of Life? Have you? Go down into the depths and look at them. See people waking to the Dawn of Nothing. Listen to the cry of the fallen — men and women bruised and maimed in this devil's-smithy. Go and look at them. It will help you. If you have a heart you will help them."

THE PEOPLE OF THE PLAY

Dr. Lanfear
Dr. Cobb
John Burrows
A Patient
Servant
Mrs. Lanfear
Mrs. Burrows
Kate Burrows
Nurse

The action of Acts I and II passes in Dr. Lanfear's consulting-room in the Spring of 1913.

The third act takes place in a Villa by the Sea two weeks later.

Out of the Depths

ACT I

The action passes in Dr. Lanfear's *consulting office. The room is quite dark except for some faint moonlight that streams in through the sides and bottom of the curtains on the open windows at the back and a gleam of electric light from the hall through the partly open doors L. After a few moments some one enters and turns on the lights in the room. He is* Dr. Lanfear, *a slim, dark, tense, eager young man of 32. He goes back to the open doors L., beckons, and is immediately joined by* Kate Burrows, *an extremely pretty, sensitive, happy-looking girl of 22.* Dr. Lanfear *closes the doors. The sounds die away.*

DR. LANFEAR

You don't mind leaving them?

KATE

I'm glad to.

DR. LANFEAR

When I'm tired music irritates me. [*Smiles at her.*]

KATE

And I hate playing cards. It's much nicer here. The first time I've seen it. [*Looking around.*] So this is where you work miracles.

DR. LANFEAR

[*Chaffingly.*] Often.

KATE

[*Walking around examining things.*] Relieve suffering.

DR. LANFEAR

Yes.

KATE

Bring life to death.

DR. LANFEAR

Frequently.

KATE

And health to the sick.

DR. LANFEAR

Always.

KATE

What a wonderful life yours must be.

DR. LANFEAR

It is.

KATE

I'd love to be a doctor.

DR. LANFEAR

Come along in. There's plenty of room in the profession.

KATE

I wish I could. [*He smiles.*] Really I do. What a lot of power and influence you doctors must have.

DR. LANFEAR

Too much — sometimes.

KATE

Why?

DR. LANFEAR

They are dangerous forces to use properly. They need conscience as a balance-wheel.

KATE

Of course. [*Looks earnestly at him.*] *You* have a conscience.

DR. LANFEAR

We all have.

KATE

Well?

DR. LANFEAR

Sometimes it sleeps.

KATE

[*Eagerly.*] Has yours?

DR. LANFEAR

Not yet. I've not been at it very long.

KATE

[*With a sigh of relief.*] You frightened me. All doctors should have consciences.

DR. LANFEAR

I'd make it part of their qualification.

KATE

You're laughing at me.

[*They look at each other a moment then laugh merrily together, care-free as though they were children. She suddenly resumes her tour of inspection and points to the straight-backed oak chair L. of the table.*]

Is that the poor patient's chair?

DR. LANFEAR

Depends on the case.

KATE

Why?

DR. LANFEAR

When I want them to *relax* I put them in *here.* [*Goes behind the comfortable chair R. of table.*]

KATE

Oh. And this? [*Touching the one L. of table.*]

DR. LANFEAR

High-backed: gives support. Broad arms! Good to hold on to.

[KATE *shudders and moves away.*]

DR. LANFEAR

Come here. [*Wheels the chair R. of table forward.*]
[KATE *sits in the comfortable padded chair.*]

DR. LANFEAR

Relax.
[*She sinks back.*]
Now answer me one or two questions. [*Sits in a professional manner in the chair behind the table.*]

KATE

[*Smiling faintly.*] I feel almost ill.

DR. LANFEAR

[*Takes her wrist and feels her pulse, watch in hand.*]
Pulse high: colour uncertain: breathing rapid —

KATE

[*Withdrawing her wrist with a jerk.*] Don't!

DR. LANFEAR

Shall I tell you what is wrong with you?
[KATE *nods, with a half-frightened smile on her lips.*]

DR. LANFEAR

You are suffering from the most common ailment amongst some women in America to-day — inertia. You are ambitious, yet you do nothing.

KATE

My family don't want me to.

DR. LANFEAR

The *individual* should rise superior to the *family*.

KATE

What do you think I should do?

DR. LANFEAR

You have only to choose. Women are doing *everything*.

KATE

I'm so useless. I've not been brought up to do anything.

DR. LANFEAR

You are on the threshold of womanhood in a world of striving women. Are you content to be left in the race?

KATE

No.

DR. LANFEAR

Then join the procession.

KATE

Do you want me to be a suffragette?

DR. LANFEAR

I want you to give the best that is in you to *life* — not to dreams, and stupid chatter and tennis and dances. That is only *playing* at life.

KATE

All right. I'll start something right away.

DR. LANFEAR

I wish you would. It isn't the daily round of duties and pleasures that makes our lives. It is the something above them. Something in the mind. It is *that* makes life.

KATE

Poor little me. I haven't got a mind. It's too bad, but really I haven't. It's the one thing my parents agree on. How stupid you must think me.

DR. LANFEAR

I'm coming to that.

KATE

[*Pouting.*] Oh! *Are* you!

DR. LANFEAR

For months there has been something in *my* mind, that has risen up often between me and my work. It whispers to me at a bed of suffering: it cries to me a hundred times through the day.

KATE

How naughty of it. What is it?

DR. LANFEAR

Love.

KATE

[*Startled.*] Love? [*Looking at him curiously.*] *Love!*

DR. LANFEAR

Yes. For you. [*Pause.*] Sometimes I've thought I've seen it in your eyes, too. Have I? [*Pause.*] I love you. [*She rises and moves away. Follows her.*] *Have* I seen it in your eyes? *Do* you love me?

KATE

How can I — if I haven't got a *mind?* You must have a mind to love.

DR. LANFEAR

Have a mind to love me. Will you?

KATE

But I'm so stupid. You said so.

DR. LANFEAR

Will you marry me?

KATE

Not until I've *done* something.

DR. LANFEAR

Will you then?

KATE

Perhaps.

DR. LANFEAR

That means you will. Doesn't it?

KATE

Oh, I don't know. If I ever develop a *mind* I may change it. That is woman's right, isn't it?

DR. LANFEAR

Do you like me?

KATE

[*Nods.*] A bit.

DR. LANFEAR

How much?

KATE

Quite a good deal really.

DR. LANFEAR

Enough to marry me?

KATE

Very nearly — after I've done something.
[DR. LANFEAR *goes to embrace her.*]

KATE

[*Checks him.*] Stop! You must wait until I've joined the procession.

DR. LANFEAR

I wish I hadn't said that now.

KATE

I'm very glad you did. I'm going to join the striving women and make my life.

DR. LANFEAR

And then? Will you become a doctor's wife?

KATE

[*Excitedly.*] Oh! I'll like that. May I sit here with you?

DR. LANFEAR

[*Decidedly.*] No. You may not.

KATE

But I wouldn't *say* anything. I'd only *listen.*

DR. LANFEAR

I'd have a fine chance to get the truth out of a patient with you listening.

KATE

[*Disappointedly.*] Why not?

DR. LANFEAR

It's hard enough to wring it out of them *alone.* With you here it would be impossible.

KATE

Couldn't I share in your work?

DR. LANFEAR

Not by *listening.* But there are a thousand other ways where a doctor's wife can be a real help-mate.

KATE

Are there?

DR. LANFEAR

There are.

KATE

And you'd let me?

DR. LANFEAR

I *will* let you. I'll do more — I'll *make* you. [*Whispers.*] Do you love me?

KATE

[*Nods: whispers.*] Yes.

DR. LANFEAR

[*Whispers.*] You'll marry a doctor?

KATE

[*Nods: whispers.*] Yes.

DR. LANFEAR

Soon?

KATE

[*Nods: whispers.*] After I've done something.

[Dr. Lanfear *takes her suddenly and impulsively in his arms. The doors L. open abruptly and* John Burrows *appears in the opening looking curiously in. The sound of voices rises in the distance.* Burrows *is a robust, sandy-haired, authoritative man of 55. He has the positiveness of speech and the crude dominance of manner of a man thoroughly satisfied with*

conditions and of one who has reached his ambition in life through his own efforts. He glowers at the young people.]

BURROWS

Hello! [*Comes well into the room: speaks to* KATE.] Yer mother wants ye.

KATE

[*Goes to him.*] Isn't this room wonderful?

BURROWS

[*Looks around disgustedly.*] I don't see anything wonderful about it. Gives me the creeps. [*Contracts his shoulders.*] I hate doctors' offices anyway.

KATE

Fancy! This is where Dr. Lanfear sees his patients.

BURROWS

Just what it looks like. [*Shivers.*] Cold as an ice box.

KATE

He's been examining *me*.

BURROWS

What's the matter with ye?

KATE

He'll tell you what I'm suffering from.

BURROWS

Suffering from? Ye've never been sick in yer life.

KATE

I am now.

BURROWS

Ye don't look it. It must be since ye came in here. [*Scowls at* DR. LANFEAR.] It's his business to make people sick.

KATE

No — to *cure* them. He's going to cure *me.*

[*Laughs merrily, goes out through doors L., pulls them almost together, then speaks through the tiny opening.*]

He'll tell you.

[*Shuts herself out of sight. The sound of voices dies away.*]

BURROWS

[*Abruptly to* DR. LANFEAR.] What's all this about?

DR. LANFEAR

[*Goes across and pulls the heavy curtains over the doors L.*]

BURROWS

What are ye doin'? Shuttin' us in like that? I don't want to stay here.

[DR. LANFEAR *goes down to chair behind the table.*]

BURROWS

[*Watching him suspiciously.*] Is my girl sick?

DR. LANFEAR

No.

BURROWS

Then what's all this fuss about?

DR. LANFEAR

I want to talk to you.

BURROWS

Well, we'll go in the next room. This one's like a morgue.

DR. LANFEAR

I won't keep you long.

BURROWS

Get on with it then. What's wrong?

DR. LANFEAR

Nothing as yet. In fact, everything's all right, so far as I can see. [*Opens cigar box.*]

BURROWS

[*Looks in disgust at the room.*] Nice place *this* is.

DR. LANFEAR

Cigar? [*Hands cigar-box.*]

BURROWS

Yes, I will, I've been wantin' one this hour. Hate drawin' rooms. [*Pushes box away.*] I'll use me own. Never knew a doctor yet had a decent cigar. If he *had* he never gave 'em away. [*Takes out massive case, selects a cigar, and bites the end off.*]

[DR. LANFEAR *lights a match and holds it out.* BURROWS *refuses it.*]

I'm not ready. Burn yer fingers. I can light me own.

[*Lights cigar with match from his own gold match-box.* DR. LANFEAR *brings decanter of whisky and a syphon.* BURROWS *helps himself and drinks. Looks at* DR. LANFEAR.]

Aren't ye goin' to have some?

DR. LANFEAR

No.

BURROWS

[*Suspiciously.*] What's the matter with it? [*Smells the whisky in the glass.*]

DR. LANFEAR

I stopped years ago.

BURROWS

Ye look like it. Put blood into ye. [*Finishes glass.*] Stopped smokin', too?

DR. LANFEAR

Yes.

BURROWS

You're a hell of a fellow. Too bad about you. Now then, whatever ye've got to say, out with it, and don't be so mysterious. [*Is about to sit in straight backed chair L. of table.*]

DR. LANFEAR

[*Quickly.*] Not that one.

BURROWS

[*Springs back.*] Is it infectious?

DR. LANFEAR

[*Touching the chair R. of table.*] This is more comfortable.

BURROWS

[*Sits heavily: tries to settle himself in it: grunts.*] Comfortable? Hard as iron. This is a *fine* room.

[DR. LANFEAR *moves nervously about.*]

BURROWS

Come here.

[DR. LANFEAR *goes to him.*]

What were you examining my girl for?

DR. LANFEAR

I love her.

BURROWS

[*Aghast.*] Oh! *Do* ye!

DR. LANFEAR

And she loves me.

BURROWS

[*Grimly.*] Indeed?

DR. LANFEAR

We are engaged to be married.

BURROWS

Is that so? And where do *I* come in? You're a fine young fellow an' no mistake. Ye think that's all there is to it, eh? You love her, she loves you, and there you are. You're a *fine* young fellow. If I'd known *that* was in the wind I wouldn't have eaten dinner in yer house. I didn't come to see *you* anyway. My wife wanted to dine with yer mother and I trailed along. Now ye —

[Dr. Lanfear *moves restlessly up and down the room.*]

Keep still, can't ye? How can I talk to ye if ye keep jiggin' about?

[Dr. Lanfear *sits on Chesterfield R.*]

So you want to marry my daughter?

DR. LANFEAR

Yes.

BURROWS

What for?

DR. LANFEAR

I love her.

BURROWS

That's no reason.

DR. LANFEAR

I think it is.

BURROWS

Just startin' life, ain't ye?

DR. LANFEAR

Yes.

BURROWS

What do ye want to handicap yerself by marryin' for?

DR. LANFEAR

I don't consider marriage a handicap.

BURROWS

Don't ye? I do. My son married at 22. What's the result? What's he doin' at the same age when I was earnin' good money an' buildin' up me fortune? What's *he* doin'? Wearin' down his heels peddlin' things on commission with a wife and a couple of children worryin' themselves sick in an up-town apartment. He thought I'd take care of 'em. Not me. "You married her," I said to him. "Go out an' hustle to keep her. Ye didn't consult me about it. Very well, then. Don't

bring yer poor-mouth tales now. Get out." An' he *got* out. [*Laughs grimly.*] Now *you* want to do the same thing with my daughter.

DR. LANFEAR

The cases are hardly similar.

BURROWS

How old are ye?

DR. LANFEAR

Thirty-two.

BURROWS

How long have ye been a doctor?

DR. LANFEAR

Five years.

BURROWS

What's yer income?

DR. LANFEAR

Ten thousand dollars — good years.

BURROWS

And the *bad* ones?

DR. LANFEAR

As low as four.

BURROWS

What could ye give my daughter on four thousand dollars a year? Eh? Ye'd get nothing from me. I tell ye that straight.

DR. LANFEAR

The last two years my practice has steadily increased.

BURROWS

Do ye take care of yer mother?

DR. LANFEAR

She has her own income.

BURROWS

Is yer father alive?

DR. LANFEAR

No. He died when I was a child.

BURROWS

What was he?

DR. LANFEAR

I really don't know.

BURROWS

Don't know, eh? Why not?

DR. LANFEAR

My mother never speaks of him.

BURROWS

That so. Somethin' *shady*, eh?

DR. LANFEAR

Something very *unhappy,* I imagine. [*Looking straight at* BURROWS.]

BURROWS

Ha! Another of 'em. Married an' made a mess of it. An' you want to follow along. Strap yerself up when ye ought to be foot-loose. Ye want my permission to saddle *you* with *her* an' make *her* miserable with *you.*

DR. LANFEAR

[*Rises, angrily.*] You've no right to say that.

BURROWS

[*Loudly.*] Oh! Haven't I? She's my daughter, ain't she?

[DR. LANFEAR *turns indignantly up the room.*]

BURROWS

There you go again. Come here. [*Pause — then insistently.*] Come here.

[DR. LANFEAR *moves down in front of* BURROWS *and stands looking down moodily at him.*]

BURROWS

[*Disgustedly eyeing* DR. LANFEAR *up and down.*] A *doctor!* Dependin' for yer livin' on the health of this city.

DR. LANFEAR

No. Upon its disease.

BURROWS

It must be a damned unpleasant way to make money.

DR. LANFEAR

It's the most wonderful of *all* ways.

BURROWS

[*Derisively.*] *Is* it!

DR. LANFEAR

No priest, no statesman, no philosopher can do what the modern physician can.

BURROWS

Ha! I always hate to see a doctor in *my* house.

DR. LANFEAR

You're glad enough to send for one when sickness comes into it.

BURROWS

I'm better pleased when he's gone *out* of it. Can't understand why ye should have taken it up. There are plenty of nice clean *businesses* for a smart young man. A *doctor!* Always handling a lot of dirty creatures. Ugh! [*Shivers in disgust.*]

DR. LANFEAR

There's nothing dirty to a doctor in a suffering man or woman. He looks at the *human being* — not at the externals.

BURROWS

Ye mean ye get so used to it that yer sight and smell get hardened, eh?

DR. LANFEAR

On the contrary our senses become so acute that *nothing* is disgusting. The *unclean* are the first to be affected *by* uncleanliness both of mind and body.

BURROWS

[*Rising furiously.*] Do you mean that *I* am —?

DR. LANFEAR

Not necessarily. I don't know you well enough. But I resent your attitude toward my profession.

BURROWS

[*Sitting back again in the chair and glaring at the doctor.*] Is *that* so?

DR. LANFEAR

You talk as so many of your kind do from absolute ignorance.

BURROWS

*In*deed! I'm ignorant, am I? *That's* a good beginning anyway.

DR. LANFEAR

Have you ever given a thought to the outcasts of a city as big as New York? The Wreckage of Life? Have you?

BURROWS

No, I've not. I've got something better to do — outcasts indeed. I'd look fine wasting me time on *them*.

DR. LANFEAR

Go down into the depths and look at them. See people waking to the Dawn of Nothing. Listen to the cry of the fallen — men and women bruised and maimed in this devil's-smithy. Go and look at them. It will help you. If you have a heart you will help *them*. If you have any feeling left in you, you won't think of their *dirt*. Neither do the thousands of striving, silent, uncomplaining doctors who are protecting the people of to-morrow by bringing health and hope and faith to the people to-day. Do you know that it is to the *doctor* more than to the *law-maker* that we may hope for the future generations being freed from crime?

BURROWS

No, I don't. Nor anybody else. You've got a fine conceit, you have. *Doctors* indeed. Pick yer pocket some of 'em. They've made holes in mine often enough. How can doctors cure crime? Tell me that.

DR. LANFEAR

All *vice* is a form of disease. So is all *crime*. And it must be treated *as* a disease to make a cure.

BURROWS

Haven't we enough prisons to teach criminals to be honest in?

DR. LANFEAR

We have quite enough prisons. But no prison ever taught a man to be honest. They are the hot-houses of crime where the criminals of to-morrow are incubated. The law *makes* criminals: doctors *cure* them. We *heal:* the law *inflames.*

BURROWS

They're damn nice sentiments for a man who wants to come into my family.

DR. LANFEAR

What does the law do for the persons who break it?

BURROWS

Sends 'em to jail — and the proper place for 'em.

DR. LANFEAR

And *afterwards?*

BURROWS

What do ye mean — *afterwards?*

DR. LANFEAR

When they've served their sentence instead of being given a fair start they're hounded from place to place: they're robbed of a chance to make an honest living. Employers are warned against them —

BURROWS

[*Breaking in.*] And quite right, too. I'd expect to be warned if I had a thief working for me.

DR. LANFEAR

Exactly. That's what the law-makers and business-men do. Now *this* is what we doctors do. There is a small but steadily increasing band of men in New York — I am one of them — who ask the wrecks of life to come to us the moment they are free.

BURROWS

And what do you do with them?

DR. LANFEAR

Treat them as sick people; care for them; find them work; guarantee them with employers.

BURROWS

And ye get nothing for it?

DR. LANFEAR

We get *everything:* something beyond money — the knowledge that we are helping in a certain way poor wretches whom no one else has ever thought of helping in that particular way.

BURROWS

Do you mean to say ye spend yer time takin' care of "crooks"?

DR. LANFEAR

Some of it.

BURROWS

Why it's like havin' yer pocket picked an' then askin' the pickpocket to come along home an' have dinner with ye. Look here, young man. You work for yerself if ye want to be my son-in-law.

DR. LANFEAR

I *am* working for myself. I am developing every day — at least I try to. The *great* doctor must be the complete *man,* and his greatness can only come after years of striving and suffering: of ceaseless work and endless charity.

BURROWS

[*Changing his tone from bluster to conciliation.*] Now see here, I know there's big money in doctoring — ye should see some of the bills I've had to pay for me wife — they'd make yer mouth water. Why, for a year after my girl was born she was hardly ever out of her bed. An' doctors muckin' about day and night. They seem to hunt in couples — if ye'll stand for it. Now and again they'd call in a *third* to keep 'em company. They're a lonely lot. And none of 'em agreed. They all said something different. That's part of their game. Keep it goin' longer. When she could be moved one of 'em travelled with her — and a nurse. He wanted a holiday and made me pay for it. Wow! How they bled me. [*Shakes his head violently at the unpleasant memo-*

ries, then puts his hand authoritatively on DR. LANFEAR'S *shoulder.*] But I went to the *best.* The BEST, d'ye understand? The ones that charged the most. So does every one who can afford to. Now what chance have *you* got? There are more doctors in New York than you can shake a stick at. What good do *you* expect to do?

DR. LANFEAR

The unrecognised man of to-day may be the most prominent to-morrow. Opportunity makes the doctor just as in every other walk in life.

BURROWS

Ah! Now you've got it! *Make* yerself. Start right in. Go after somethin' in particular. Specialise in it. That's what *I* did. Thirty-five years ago I was a puddler — just a plain ordinary puddler. Was I satisfied? No, *sir.* I made up my mind to get on, and I did. How? *I specialised.* What's the result? "Burrows-Steel-Girders" are used half round the world. In twenty years they'll be round the *other* half. *That's* the difference between me and the fellows who started with me. They'll be puddlers all their lives. *Specialise,* my boy.

DR. LANFEAR

I do.

BURROWS

[*Eagerly.*] *Do* ye? In what?

DR. LANFEAR

I'm specialising in a habit that is undermining America from coast to coast.

BURROWS

[*Full of curiosity.*] A *habit,* eh? Drink?

DR. LANFEAR

No. Beside *it* drink is almost a *virtue.*

BURROWS

Ye don't say!

DR. LANFEAR

While the Government is trying to check it by prosecution I want to *exterminate* it by medical treatment.

BURROWS

What is it?

DR. LANFEAR

The drug-habit.

BURROWS

The *drug*-habit?

DR. LANFEAR

Morphine, heroin, cocaine —

BURROWS

[*Quickly.*] *Cocaine,* eh?

DR. LANFEAR

Ever heard of it?

BURROWS

Heard of it? I've *used* it.

DR. LANFEAR

Have you?

BURROWS

At the dentist's.

DR. LANFEAR

[*Smiles.*] What they'd give you wouldn't hurt you.

BURROWS

'Course it never hurt me. I liked it. [*Rolls his tongue round inside his mouth and smacks his lips.*] Fine stuff. [*Fills himself a large glass of whisky and pours soda into it from syphon.*]

DR. LANFEAR

Do you know that many of the men working in your steel structures do their day's work on cocaine?

BURROWS

[*Stops in the act of drinking.*] Do they? What for?

DR. LANFEAR

Because they've formed the habit and can't work without it.

BURROWS

That so? What does it do to 'em?

DR. LANFEAR

It gives temporary clearness to the brain and strength to the body. Men become slaves to it. Women too. The only happy moments they know are when under its influence. When the effects wear off they are the most miserable of human creatures.

BURROWS

And you say men like that are working for me?

DR. LANFEAR

They are to be found in almost every factory and workshop in the big cities and in many of the smaller ones.

BURROWS

[*Quickly and shrewdly.*] Would you know 'em by just *lookin'* at 'em?

DR. LANFEAR

That would depend on how far the habit had gone. Why?

BURROWS

Will ye come round an' look my men over to-morrow?

DR. LANFEAR

Would you like to know if any of them are taking drugs?

BURROWS

Yes, I would.

DR. LANFEAR

And if I find there *are* what will you do?

BURROWS

Do? Discharge 'em, of course.

DR. LANFEAR

What good would that do them?

BURROWS

I don't want to do 'em good. An' I don't want 'em to do me harm. I won't have that kind of men workin' for me. Suppose anythin' happened to 'em? I'd be responsible. Fine thing *that* 'ud be.

DR. LANFEAR

Why not try to cure them?

BURROWS

Cure 'em? Not me. Cure 'em! [*Contemptuously.*] Waste me time on a parcel of drug-takers. Ha! I'm no philanthropist.

DR. LANFEAR

Be one. You've made your money.

BURROWS

[*Loudly.*] And I made it too hard to throw it away like that.

DR. LANFEAR

Could you use it in a better way?

BURROWS

I'll use it as I like. It's *mine*. [*Pause.*] So *that's* what you're specialising in?

DR. LANFEAR

Yes.

BURROWS

Have you found a cure?

DR. LANFEAR

I think so. It depends on the patient.

BURROWS

What do you do with 'em?

DR. LANFEAR

Get rid of the poison of the drug first. Then I build up the system and strengthen the resistance — in the poor.

BURROWS

What do you do with the *rich?*

DR. LANFEAR

With the *intelligent* I try to bring back their self-respect.

BURROWS

With *physic?*

DR. LANFEAR

At first: afterwards by the power of influence.

BURROWS

Have ye made any cures?

DR. LANFEAR

To all appearances.

BURROWS

Don't ye know whether they're cured or not?

DR. LANFEAR

Any one who professes to make a complete cure of a confirmed drug-taker is either a fool or a knave. You can only destroy the effect of the poison and the craving for it. After that give them a little common-sense. If you can bring their self-respect back you've gone a long way toward a permanent cure. It takes time.

BURROWS

And *time* to a *doctor* means *money,* don't it?

DR. LANFEAR

[*Smiles.*] Sometimes.

BURROWS

[*Cunningly.*] If ye get enough of the *wealthy* ones ye could keep 'em comin' to ye for years, couldn't ye?

DR. LANFEAR

The poor interest me more. There's often a reason for *their* falling. But for people of wealth and education there's little. In many cases they're just pandering to a self-indulgent, depraved appetite; they're a curse to themselves and to every one near them. The poor are the ones we are trying to help.

BURROWS

[*Disgustedly.*] The poor!

DR. LANFEAR

You were once.

BURROWS

I know I was. And if I'd gone about tryin' to help *them* instead of *meself,* where'd I be to-day? [*Suddenly.*] What does the damn thing make 'em look like?

DR. LANFEAR

It takes so many forms that I could make your whole system revolt just to listen to them. For instance —

BURROWS

[*Stopping him.*] Never mind. I don't want to listen. How do they start it?

DR. LANFEAR

Seventy-five per cent. of the cases I've seen contracted the habit through a physician.

BURROWS

Is that so?

DR. LANFEAR

Do you know the only difference between *us* and a confirmed drug-taker?

BURROWS

No, I don't. I like your nerve. What's the difference?

DR. LANFEAR

Pain.

BURROWS

How?

DR. LANFEAR

What is the first aid to the injured to-day? The hypodermic-syringe. Suppose you were smashed up in your car — you may be at any time —

BURROWS

I never let 'em go fast.

DR. LANFEAR

Some of the worst accidents have been when one of the cars has been standing still or going slowly.

BURROWS

You're a damn uncomfortable fellow to talk to. Well? Suppose I *was* smashed up?

DR. LANFEAR

Before setting a broken limb or putting a dislocated shoulder back many doctors and surgeons, as a precautionary measure of relief, give the sufferer an injection of morphine. In a little while the pain is gone. When the morphine wears off the patient cries out for it again. Repeat the injections a sufficient number of times and the whole system needs the drug. Many of the worst cases I've seen have formed the habit that way and through no fault of their own.

BURROWS

[*Thoroughly interested.*] Ye don't say. What other ways do they start it?

DR. LANFEAR

One of the most outrageous causes of the spread of the habit — you ought to know this as the father of a family — is through allowing *nurses* to use hypodermic-syringes on patients. Until it's made a criminal offence for any nurse to administer drugs without a doctor being present no home is safe where there happens to be serious and painful illness. I've been told of cases where nurses have given morphine to children to stop them from crying so that the nurse might sleep. Of course they are rare cases. For the most part nurses are hard-working, conscientious, deserving women. Still there's the danger right in our homes. [*Moving restlessly about.*] It's horrible! [*Stops abruptly: smiles down at* BURROWS.] You've got me on my hobby. Are you interested at all?

BURROWS

[*Almost excited.*] Sure. I've often heard of *drugs,* but I thought they were just harmless things doctors and dentists used to *help* ye.

DR. LANFEAR

Very few people know what a scourge this evil is amongst us. Remarkably few *doctors* know. If they *did* they'd be very careful who they gave it to and they'd never let the patient know what it was, and would disguise in every possible way the administration of it, so that he couldn't ask for it afterwards. The drug habit has spread all over the country amongst rich and poor, young and old. In one small section of New York City a little while ago it was estimated there were a thousand youths of from 14 to 19 years old taking heroin.

BURROWS

What's that? You've got me goin' now.

DR. LANFEAR

Heroin is a derivative of morphine, is three times as strong as morphine, and is one of the most destructive of all drugs. It has only been on the market some fifteen years, and was at one time pronounced harmless by many doctors and surgeons. Up to a little while ago it could be obtained freely at all drug stores. In most of the States outside New York you can still get it without difficulty. Many of the brutal outrages that have

disfigured this city's life recently have been committed by men crazed with heroin. Under its influence they are just brutes. They know neither fear nor pity. What we are trying to do is to arouse the whole nation to the drug peril. It is not enough to prosecute those who use and sell drugs. Measures should be taken all through the United States to *cure* the people who have fallen into the habit. If there was ever an evil that needed the co-operation of the rich people of a country to free the poor, that evil is amongst us now. Hospitals should be endowed in every city with a staff of doctors specially trained to cope with it. Let us cure the addicts of *this* generation and the *next* will come into the world free of the curse. Why, children are born to-day of alcoholic and drug-taking parents with the nervous constitutions of middle-aged men and women. How can they be expected to grow up healthy and moral? Better war or pestilence or the ravages of disease in a community than this insidious horrible poison that creeps into homes through the indiscreet physician: into schools and workshops and factories and even into *prisons* through wretches vile enough to profit by selling drugs to their fellow creatures. I am told that in the South whole gangs of men are given cocaine by their taskmasters so that they have the strength to do double work for their wretched pay. And the toll of the infamous traffic is paid by overflowing prisons, crowded lunatic asylums and a waiting list at the hospitals. It is now a question of awakening the public conscience. What the people

of a country *demand* they ultimately *get*. Once let it be known broadcast that this canker is eating into the heart of the nation and those who have the pride and love of their country dear to them will bend all their energies to exterminating it. And the people who will free the nation of it will deserve monuments from the generations to come.

BURROWS

[*Stares at him in undisguised admiration.*] Say, you've got it down pretty fine. Got me all worked up. I wouldn't mind doin' somethin' meself — in a *small* way. Not *much,* mind ye. I've no sympathy with the damn fools. *Women* — yes. They're poor things anyway. But I can't understand a strong, healthy man ever starting it. Damn fool I call him. [*Pours out another whisky and soda.*]

DR. LANFEAR

Have you ever drunk too much?

BURROWS

[*Puts the glass down quickly.*] Of course I have, why shouldn't I? I can afford it.

DR. LANFEAR

Had nausea and a frontal headache in the morning?

BURROWS

Yes, I have. What of it?

DR. LANFEAR

Have you ever used morphine to get rid of it, when you've had a long day's work before you?

BURROWS

[*Indignantly.*] No, I have *not*. *Morphine* indeed. Ask *me* a question like that. I'm not a woman. No, *Sir*. I've bought some stuff at a drug store.

DR. LANFEAR

[*Smiles.*] Ah! Well, what they gave you probably contained a solution of morphine or cocaine.

BURROWS

What?

DR. LANFEAR

Many headache-cures contain one or the other. In many cases the drug habit is formed by taking morphine to offset the consequences of drinking too much overnight. Take morphine often enough in that way — just as I told you a man in pain will — and you become dependent on it. Then you stop drinking and take morphine entirely. When you've had an overdose of morphine at night you need something to clear your head in the morning — just as you did when you drank too much. Then you turn to cocaine. Once get *that* habit and, as a famous authority said recently, it is "cross lots to the mad-house" for you.

BURROWS

[*Uneasily.*] Don't keep sayin' "You! You! You!" *I've* never taken it.

DR. LANFEAR

[*Smiles.*] Thousands of cases have formed the habit through the frequent use of headache powders and patent medicines containing drugs. Nearly every one of our acquaintance has some favourite medicine, or powder that relieves pain — mind you they only *relieve* pain, they don't cure the *cause* of it. I dare to say that there is scarcely a home in the United States that hasn't some harmful drug wrapped up in an innocent looking packet or lying in an attractively labelled bottle "To be shaken before taken."

BURROWS

What about the "Pure Food and Drugs Act"? Hasn't *that* stopped 'em?

DR. LANFEAR

On the contrary, it's made it easier for the drug-taker. By printing the ingredients on a bottle or packet every one knows which of them contains their pet drug.

BURROWS

That's true enough. Well? What are ye goin' to do about it?

DR. LANFEAR

The only possible remedy is to have a central clearing-house in Washington where every ounce of every drug imported into the United States is accounted for by every doctor and drug-store proprietor. Let us know exactly where the stuff is going and we can check it. Get the traffic in drugs entirely in hand and let the addicts have medical treatment until they're cured and we'd get the scourge within bounds very quickly. No drug-store should be allowed to sell the smallest quantity of any habit-forming drug without a prescription. It is not so much the *amount* a person takes as the regularity with which they take it that forms the habit. [*Excitedly.*] I tell you it is sapping the vigour and brain of the country. I heard of one of our greatest lawyers fighting a long case on cocaine and winning it. He admitted afterwards he would have been helpless without the drug. Surgeons have been known to perform major operations stimulated by it. One of the greatest statesmen in the world made his most wonderful achievement when under its influence.

BURROWS

If it'll do all *that,* what in hell is the matter with it?

DR. LANFEAR

In time it destroys the keenness of the brain; it drains the vitality of the body. It destroys character and dulls conscience. Faith, and hope and love die in the heart

of the man who comes under its destructive power. It makes liars and rogues and outcasts out of once decent people. There is nothing they won't do to get their particular drug. There is no trick they won't practise to get it. They keep me on the alert all the time even *after* they come to the hospital to be treated.

BURROWS

How do ye mean? Don't they *want* to be?

DR. LANFEAR

They *think* they do but in case they change their mind after they've started the treatment they usually bring a good supply of their favourite drug with them and hide it.

BURROWS

Hide it? Where?

DR. LANFEAR

Under the carpet; on the top of cornice poles: anywhere they think it won't be seen. Some of them bring in handkerchiefs soaked in morphine; shirts and collars stiff with it.

BURROWS

Say! they keep ye guessin'. What do ye do?

DR. LANFEAR

I have a method with them. I usually let patients stay in a room a certain time, then send to them to go to

the bath-room. When they come out of the bath I put them in a *different* room. When they find they can't get back to the room they were first put in the trouble begins.

BURROWS

Ye don't let 'em, eh?

DR. LANFEAR

No. I just leave them in it long enough to hide all the drug they have. In addition I take into my charge everything they bring with them and examine them minutely before letting the patient have anything back. I found one with a fountain-pen with just sufficient ink in it to allay suspicion and the rest of the barrel hollow and filled with morphine pellets.

BURROWS

That sort isn't worth worryin' over — unless they pay ye well.

DR. LANFEAR

Oh, yes, they are, once we understand each other. I give them the option of obeying me or clearing out. *That* is the evil I am trying to free this country from. [*Walks up and down.*]

BURROWS

Phew! [*Loosens his collar; goes to window at back R and pushes it wide open, jerking the blind up to the top.*] Let us have some fresh air. I feel as if I'd been in a hospital. Damn sorry I came in here. [*Moves*

down.] I'll examine all my men to-morrow and worry my head off which of 'em takes drugs.

DR. LANFEAR

[*Raises decanter of whisky.*] Another?

BURROWS

No, I won't. [*Shivers.*] First thing I know *I'll* want morphine. Ye've made me feel as if I'd been takin' it all my life without knowin' it. [DR. LANFEAR *laughs.*] All right. Laugh. Half your stock-in-trade's makin' people feel uncomfortable. Wow! How you can *talk*. I'm off. [*Goes to doors L., stops, thinks, goes back quite close to* DR. LANFEAR *and asks him quietly and confidentially.*] What do ye mean when ye get a *rich* drug-taker — ye try and bring back his self-respect? How do ye do that?

DR. LANFEAR

When the craving for the drug has been eliminated and the gnawing pains of the deprivation of the drug have gone, I try to find out exactly what the patient's mental attitude was before the habit was formed. Having found that out the next step is to make the brain think back to what it was at that time: to compel the brain to do what it used to do before it came under the influence of the drug. Few have any real liking for the drug in itself. But the brain retains the remembrance of the sensations of relief, of stimulation, of increased

muscular and cerebral activity and, at other times of complete, delightful rest. When these effects pass away and the craving returns memory demands the thing that gave such instant and marvellous relief. It longs for the sight of a hypodermic-syringe, it craves for the shock of the quick stab of the needle, the inrush of the fluid and the practically immediate effect of the drug. I tell you the gun never did as much harm in a community as a hypodermic-syringe! Syringes have done incalculable mischief in causing and fostering the drug-habit. Yet until a little while ago they could be bought as easily as chewing-gum or candy. Now you have either to destroy that remembrance or create a feeling of revulsion at it if you are going permanently to cure the habit. No self-respecting man or woman *wants* to be a drug-fiend. Very well, give them back their self-respect and the craving is gone.

BURROWS

[*Now very interested.*] Go on. Tell me. How? How do ye do it?

DR. LANFEAR

Here's an instance. One night a man begged of me in the street. Something in his voice arrested my attention: his manner aroused my suspicions. I gave him some money. He hardly waited to thank me and hurried away. I followed him. He went straight to a pedlar of cocaine on a street-corner — a few years ago it was sold openly in the streets — and bought a packet

with the money I had given him. I took it away from him, questioned him, finally I brought him here. I worked on that man for several days. I drove the poison out of him. I nourished his body. Gradually the inflamed state of his brain gave place to a saner and more normal condition. He began to speak intelligently instead of with the servility and coarseness of a professional beggar. I encouraged him to talk freely. He had a command of language that showed the scholar. One day we touched on science. He became excited and argued and expounded eagerly. He became quite tense and wrought up. He had absolute, definite knowledge. One phrase he used struck me. I'd heard it as a boy in a lecture given by one of the most prominent scientists in the country. I picked a book off that shelf and turned to a certain chapter on the subject we had been discussing. *There was the identical phrase word for word.* I handed him the book. "Look, Professor ——," and I called him by name. He took the book, glanced at it, and burst out crying. The *real* cure had begun. His self-respect had wakened. His mind had swept back to the clean, healthy days before he had fouled his system with the filthy poison. The rest was easy.

BURROWS

[*Excitedly.*] Ye cured him?

DR. LANFEAR

He cured himself in that moment of shame.

BURROWS

Is he workin' again?

DR. LANFEAR

Yes, and with all his old power.

BURROWS

[*Under his breath.*] I'm damned. [*Loudly and enthusiastically.*] I shouldn't wonder if ye make a fortune out of it. You've got a head on yer shoulders. Wouldn't think it to look at ye. Go after it. I'll go in with ye. It looks good to me. Get that fellow to give you a testimonial. What was his name?

[DR. LANFEAR *smiles and shakes his head.*]

Is the book here? [*Turning to the book-shelves.*]

DR. LANFEAR

[*Still smiling.*] Very likely.

BURROWS

[*Peering at the books.*] Ye don't say. I'd like to know *which!*

[*The door R. opens and* DR. COBB, *a fair, enthusiastic young man of 25 enters. He comes in breezily and loudly singing the latest successful song from a New York revue. He stops abruptly when he sees* BURROWS *and speaks to* DR. LANFEAR.]

DR. COBB

Sorry. Didn't think you'd have a patient at this time.

BURROWS

[*Indignantly.*] I'm no *patient.*

DR. LANFEAR

[*Laughs and introduces them.*] Dr. Cobb — Mr. Burrows.

BURROWS

[*Nods curtly at* Dr. Cobb, *turns to* Dr. Lanfear.] *Another* doctor. Do you *always* hunt in couples?

DR. LANFEAR

We're partners.

[Burrows *turns abruptly back to the book-shelves.*]

DR. COBB

[*Hands* Dr. Lanfear *an open letter.*] Can you see this chap for me? I've got a meeting in there.

[*The sound of the harp and piano rises faintly in the distance playing a modern dance tune.*]

[Dr. Cobb's *eyes brighten and he hums the tune.*] Hello! Dancing in there?

DR. LANFEAR

No. Just a little music. [*Reading the letter.*]

DR. COBB

Oh, never mind then. Let him come round in the morning, or wait until the meeting's over. It's only a charity case. Bristal, the broker's sent him.

[*Reading the letter over* DR. LANFEAR'S *shoulder and pointing to the signature.*]
See?

DR. LANFEAR

What is the matter with him?

DR. COBB

Everything by the look of him. Let him wait.

DR. LANFEAR

I'll see him.

DR. COBB

Sure you don't mind?

DR. LANFEAR

Not a bit.

DR. COBB

[*Starts for the door R.*] Thank ye.

DR. LANFEAR

[*Following him.*] What's the meeting?

DR. COBB

Discussing the Drug-Stores-Proprietors' Amendment to the new drug act. What they don't know in there about drugs would fill the public library. Might be chewing candy. They all asked for you.

DR. LANFEAR

Waste of time talking to them.

DR. COBB

That's why you shove 'em on to me, I suppose?

DR. LANFEAR

[*Laughs.*] Send the man in.

[DR. COBB *goes out R.*]

BURROWS

[*Looks up from one of the lower shelves, taking out a book and reading the title.*] "Science and Health!" Is *this* it?

DR. LANFEAR

No. That is one of the most wonderful books ever written — and it is the work of a woman.

[BURROWS *grunts and puts the book back.*]

Now I must turn you out.

BURROWS

Ye can't *turn* me out. I'm goin'.

[*Goes to doors L.*]

You take hold of yerself, cut out the *poor* business, go after the *rich.* If you'd listen to me, in six months I'd make a man of ye.

DR. LANFEAR

[*Smiling.*] My mother anticipated you.

BURROWS

[*Laughs a little, dry, cracked laugh.*] Ha!

DR. LANFEAR

[*Going to him.*] Thank you so much for your kindly congratulations on my engagement to your daughter.

BURROWS

What's that? *I* congratulate ye?

DR. LANFEAR

I'm sure you do.

BURROWS

I've not said you can have her yet.

DR. LANFEAR

[*Smiles good-naturedly at* BURROWS.] But you're going to.

[*Opens door L. The music is heard distinctly.*]

BURROWS

I'll say *this* for ye. Ye've got plenty of *nerve.*

DR. LANFEAR

I need it in my profession.

BURROWS

[*Looks at him a minute, then laughs heartily.*] You're a *fine* young fellow, I must say.

DR. LANFEAR

[*Laughs heartily with him.*] Tell my mother I have a patient to see. I'll be in the moment he goes.

BURROWS

Ye know I wouldn't mind ye so much if ye weren't such a damn fool.

[*Goes out L.*]

[DR. LANFEAR *closes the doors L., draws the curtains. The sounds become quite faint, after a while they stop.*]

[DR. LANFEAR *thinks a moment, then goes to an entirely different book-shelf than the one* BURROWS *was examining, looks through the shelves, finds the book he is looking for, opens it and reads, his brows knit.*]

[DR. COBB *enters R.*]

DR. COBB

Here he is. [*Turns and calls.*] Come along in. [*Turns to* DR. LANFEAR.] I'll look in when they've gone, may I?

DR. LANFEAR

Do!

DR. COBB

How they *talk* — and *what* talk!

[THE PATIENT *comes slowly in through the door R.*]

[DR. COBB *goes out R., closing the door after him.*]

[DR. LANFEAR *stands by the book-case reading interestedly.*]

[THE PATIENT *stands quite still near the door waiting for* DR. LANFEAR *to notice him. He is a stooped, wretched, dirty-looking man well over fifty. His hair*

is a greyish-white, long, matted and unbrushed. It comes down almost to his eyes, completely hiding his forehead. There are several days' growth of hair on his face. His left arm hangs limply by his side. In his right hand he clutches a dirty, torn, crumpled cloth cap. His clothes are ragged and shiny, his boots broken and down at heel. He continually bends forward jerkily and then tries to straighten himself with nervous convulsive twitchings. He occasionally rubs the back of his hand across his nose several times in rapid succession as if it itched him. His eyes are considerably projected, showing an unnaturally bright, distended pupil, the white of the eye very prominent. His facial muscles twitch continually. His eyes blink constantly as though the light were too strong for them. His skin is a moist, yellowish-green. He starts when spoken to and avoids the questioner's eyes.]

DR. LANFEAR

[*Closes the book, puts it back on the shelf and turns to* THE PATIENT, *glances at the letter* DR. COBB *gave him.*] Mr. Bristal sent you?

THE PATIENT

[*Starts, hesitates, looks down, answers huskily in a common, coarse voice.*] Yes, sir.

DR. LANFEAR

Do you work for him?

THE PATIENT

Yes, sir.

DR. LANFEAR

What kind of work?

[The Patient *hesitates, tries to speak, stops.*]

[*Sharply.*] Well?

THE PATIENT

[*Starts, tries to straighten himself, then goes back to his crouching, twitching position.*] Anything he gives me — about the house — an' grounds.

DR. LANFEAR

What's your trouble?

THE PATIENT

[*In the dull tone of a man long suffering from pain.*] My arm, sir. [*Touches his left arm.*] I can't use it.

DR. LANFEAR

Why not?

THE PATIENT

It hurts me so.

DR. LANFEAR

What's the matter with it?

THE PATIENT

[*Hesitates. Looks at the ground.*] I — I — I *cut* it.

DR. LANFEAR

With what?

THE PATIENT

[*Hesitates again.*] I fell. Something sharp. It cut my arm. It cut it.

DR. LANFEAR

Let me look at it. Take off your coat.

[*Goes to table and turns on the powerful moveable electric light.*]

[THE PATIENT, *trembling violently, goes to him, drops his cap on the floor, begins to take off his coat: directly the sleeve presses on his left arm he moans and clutches it, swaying backwards and forwards in pain.*] Wait a minute!

[*Goes to him and holds the sleeve open and loose, so that* THE PATIENT *can free his arm without contact:* DR. LANFEAR *slips the coat off.*]

[THE PATIENT *is then seen to have no waistcoat, just a ragged, grey shirt with collar attached. His trousers are held up by an old belt. His right hand feebly supports the wounded arm whilst he continues to convulsively bend forward and then try to straighten himself.*]

[DR. LANFEAR *takes up the left arm and dexterously slips the shirt up the arm and doubles it in at the shoulder, disclosing the forearm considerably inflamed in the centre and front. A large ugly-looking abscess has formed.*]

[DR. LANFEAR *wheels the upright chair into position facing him, motions the man to sit in it. He then sits in the revolving chair, moves the light into position, takes up the wounded arm, and examines it closely under the strong light through a magnifying glass.*]

[*In a matter-of-fact tone.*] How long has this troubled you?

THE PATIENT

For weeks. Night and day. Weeks.

DR. LANFEAR

[*Places the magnifying glass close down on the injured arm and bends the light on to it.*] What did you fall on?

[*His questions are mechanical: they convey no apparent intention or suspicion.*]

THE PATIENT

[*Nervously.*] Something — something *sharp.*

DR. LANFEAR

Something sharp, eh? [*In the same even tone.*] Was it a needle?

THE PATIENT

[*Vehemently.*] No. It wasn't!

[*Tries to drag his arm away from the doctor's close scrutiny.*]

DR. LANFEAR

[*Holding* THE PATIENT'S *arm firmly.*] Steady. [*Continues to examine it.*] Are you *sure* it wasn't a a needle?

THE PATIENT

[*Doggedly.*] Yes. I am. It *wasn't* a needle. *No.*

DR. LANFEAR

What was it then?

THE PATIENT

Something *sharp,* I tell ye. Don't know what it was. Mebbe a bit of stone — or a *nail.* That's what it was — a *nail.*

DR. LANFEAR

What are all those marks?

THE PATIENT

I don't know. [*Moans.*] You're hurting me. Let me go.

[DR. LANFEAR *suddenly drops the man's arm and moves the lamp up so that light shines full on* THE PATIENT'S *face, which is drawn with pain and is ghastly in the cold white light.*]

[*He instantly blinks in the strong light, lowers his eyes, turns slightly away, twitching furiously and breathing thickly.*]

[*The doctor speaks to him sharply.*]

DR. LANFEAR

Look at me!

[THE PATIENT *turns frightenedly still further away as if afraid to meet the other's eyes.*]

[DR. LANFEAR *rises and says commandingly.*]

Look at me!

[*He lifts* THE PATIENT'S *chin and holds the head well up in the light, searching the features with a quick, penetrating, comprehensive glance. Then he releases* THE PATIENT *and sinks back in the chair, looking at the man intently.*]

[THE PATIENT *rises, shivering with fear.*]

Sit down.

[THE PATIENT *turns away to the Chesterfield R.*]

There. [*Points to the chair under the light.*]

[THE PATIENT *sits chattering and twitching.*]

How long have you been taking *cocaine?*

[THE PATIENT *cowers down in the chair.*]

How long?

[*Waits: the man does not answer.*]

If I'm going to help you, you must tell me the truth. How long?

THE PATIENT

[*Doggedly.*] I don't take it.

DR. LANFEAR

Yes, you do.

[*Suddenly springs up, takes* THE PATIENT'S *right hand, turns up the sleeve and examines the arm.*]

You work with your *left* arm, don't you?

THE PATIENT

Yes.

DR. LANFEAR

And since you *cut* it you have been injecting cocaine in this?

[THE PATIENT *does not answer. He is like a trapped thief, caught in the act.*]

[DR. LANFEAR *sits again.*]

You've infected your arm with a dirty needle.

THE PATIENT

[*Sullenly.*] It *wasn't* a needle, I tell ye. [*After a moment he asks piteously.*] Is it poisoned?

DR. LANFEAR

Yes.

THE PATIENT

[*Anxiously.*] Will I lose it?

DR. LANFEAR

You might very easily, if you let it go on like that.

[THE PATIENT *moans.*]

We must get to work on it at once. We'll send you down to a hospital to-night —

THE PATIENT

[*Springing up and chattering with fear.*] I won't go to a hospital. I won't go.

DR. LANFEAR

Why not?

THE PATIENT

I won't go to a hospital. I won't. I *won't!* [*Goes away R., muttering to himself.*]

DR. LANFEAR

You'll be well taken care of.

THE PATIENT

[*Savagely.*] I won't *go,* I tell ye. I *won't.* [*Fiercely.*] A *hospital.* Not me. Oh, no. *Hospital* indeed. I won't. Not me! [*He goes on muttering inaudibly, all the while his right hand clutching above and below the infected part of his poisoned left arm.*]

DR. LANFEAR

[*Shrewdly.*] You couldn't get any cocaine there, could you?

THE PATIENT

I tell ye I don't take it.

DR. LANFEAR

Then why won't you go?

THE PATIENT

I *won't.* That's all. I *won't.* Not me.

DR. LANFEAR

Then I can do nothing for you. That requires immediate and constant attention. If you don't care to go where you'll get it, consult some other doctor. [*Turns away from the man and makes some notes on a pad.*]

THE PATIENT

[*Slowly turns round and looks at the doctor. Then he pleads.*] Couldn't you give me something to ease it? Couldn't ye?

DR. LANFEAR

Do what I tell you and I'll *cure* it.

THE PATIENT

Not a hospital. Not *that.* Shut away from every one. A charity case. Treated like a dog. Oh, no. Not me. Not *that.* I've had some of that. Lot of brutes. Never again. Not me.

DR. LANFEAR

[*Finally.*] All right. That'll do.

[*Motions him to go, takes up a pamphlet, turns over the pages, all the while watching the man.*]

[THE PATIENT *picks up his coat and begins to put it on. The moment the sleeve touches the sore arm he stops and draws in his breath, but he does not moan.*]

Why won't you tell me the truth?

THE PATIENT

I am telling ye the truth.

DR. LANFEAR

You're afraid of losing your arm?

THE PATIENT

[*Almost crying with fear and pain.*] I am. That's why I asked Mr. Bristal to help me. It burns — all day an' all night. I haven't slept. Can't ye give me something to stop the pain? Can't ye? [*Pleading.*] *Won't* ye?

DR. LANFEAR

[*Swings round in his chair.*] If I take you under my own care *here:* if I don't send you to a hospital will you tell me the truth?

[*Rises and stands over him.*]

Tell me the truth and I'll save your arm.

[*Lifts* THE PATIENT'S *face up with both his hands and looks steadily at him.*]

Tell me the truth and I'll save *you.*

[*Waits:* THE PATIENT *avoids the doctor's look.*]

Will you?

THE PATIENT

[*Hesitates: makes up his mind: speaks under his breath.*] All right, sir.

[DR. LANFEAR *takes him to the Chesterfield, presses him down on to it and sits beside him.*]

DR. LANFEAR

How long have you been taking cocaine?

THE PATIENT

About five years.

DR. LANFEAR

How much a day?

THE PATIENT

As much as I can find money enough to buy. I don't need food when I can get it. I don't need sleep when I have enough. And I've strength in me too. Strength in me.

DR. LANFEAR

Do you always inject it?

THE PATIENT

When I have to use my arms I do. Don't mind working when I have a good "jolt." *

DR. LANFEAR

Just cocaine?

THE PATIENT

Half morphine. I like that way best. It's fine.

DR. LANFEAR

You're a pretty old hand at it, aren't you?

THE PATIENT

Yes, sir.

* "Jolt." An injection with a hypodermic syringe.

DR. LANFEAR

If you'd used straight cocaine, you'd have been in a mad-house long ago.

THE PATIENT

I know.

DR. LANFEAR

Do you take it any other way?

THE PATIENT

[*Touching his nose.*] Here — sometimes. But not much. Heroin's better. Far better. Doesn't cost as much and lasts longer on ye. [*Enthusiastically.*] It's great stuff.

DR. LANFEAR

How did you begin?

THE PATIENT

When I was ill. They gave me morphine to kill the pain and make me sleep.

DR. LANFEAR

Who gave it to you?

THE PATIENT

The doctor. When I got well I went on taking it. Had to. Couldn't do without it. Rotten, wasn't it?

DR. LANFEAR

What was your illness?

THE PATIENT

My nerves broke down.

DR. LANFEAR

Were you a hard drinker?

THE PATIENT

Pretty hard. Whenever I got worried I took it to keep me goin'. Got to like it at last. Drank all the time when there was nothin' doin'.

DR. LANFEAR

Do you drink now?

THE PATIENT

[*Virtuously.*] Oh, no. Haven't touched a drop for twenty years. I've reformed altogether that way.

DR. LANFEAR

When did you begin taking morphine?

THE PATIENT

About twenty years ago.

DR. LANFEAR

You had no use for drink when you could get that?

THE PATIENT

No, sir. Cut it out altogether.

DR. LANFEAR

[*Takes up the man's hands and looks at them.*] You're not a labourer?

THE PATIENT

No.

DR. LANFEAR

[*Feels the man's muscles.*] Never used your arms much?

THE PATIENT

Not much. Not until lately. Carryin' things. Diggin' and the like.

DR. LANFEAR

What was your occupation?

THE PATIENT

[*Looks away; then whispers.*] I'd rather not say.

DR. LANFEAR

A *profession?*

[THE PATIENT *nods.*]

[*Rises, his eyes shining with enthusiasm.*] We'll fight this out together. Put yourself in my hands and I'll free you of this curse.

THE PATIENT

[*Moaning feebly and shivering.*] It's too late. I'm finished. It's too late. Been at it too long. Couldn't do without it now.

DR. LANFEAR

Do you want to do without it?

THE PATIENT

Indeed I do. I'd give my right arm to be able to sleep one night without being full of the muck. But it's too late.

DR. LANFEAR

No, it's not. You're in pain — I'll ease it. You're starving, I'll give you food. You're in the depths: I'll bring you up out of them. But if I'm going to cure you, you've got to do everything I tell you. Are you willing to do that?

THE PATIENT

[*Eyes dilating: trembling violently: cries out hysterically.*] I am! Indeed I am.

DR. LANFEAR

Very well. [*Goes to table and makes some notes on pad.*] First we must look after that arm. You've got a nasty abscess there.

THE PATIENT

[*After a pause.*] I can't pay ye anything. Haven't got it. I don't suppose Mr. Bristal'll want to pay much. *I* haven't got a cent. Never will have.

DR. LANFEAR

That'll be all right.

THE PATIENT

[*The feeling of exaltation passes: he watches* Dr. Lanfear *closely: the expression on his face gradually changes to one of cunning: his body begins to twitch again: he whines like a beggar.*] Doctor? Ye won't take it *all* from me? Will ye? Not just at first? I *want* to be cured. Really I do. But ye'll let me have a little — just at first? [*Intensely.*] If ye took it *all* from me it would *kill* me. I tell ye it would *kill* me. [*Cries and wails.*] It would. It would. If ye didn't let me have a little.

DR. LANFEAR

You can have all the drug you want just as long as you need it. But one day you will say "I don't want it any more. I'll never touch the filthy poison again." And you never will? Eh?

THE PATIENT

[*Brightening up.*] Oh, no. Never. *Never.* Only just at *first* — just a little at first. It's horrible not to have it when you're used to it. [*Shivering.*] Horrible. As though ye were being tortured. Every bone in yer body aches. [*Cunningly, snivelling and rubbing his nose two or three times quickly.*] They're aching now.

DR. LANFEAR

How long since you have had any?

THE PATIENT

Not since last night. A friend staked me to some. Very little too. Hard to get it lately. Very hard. They're awful strict now.

DR. LANFEAR

None to-day? [*Puts note-pad on one side and takes up prescription pad and writes.*]

THE PATIENT

No.

DR. LANFEAR

[*Sharply.*] What?

THE PATIENT

Really — no. [*Whispers.*] Hadn't any money to buy it. [*Waits a moment as he thinks.*] Then my arm burnt so that I came here. I've carried Mr. Bristal's letter round for days. Couldn't make up my mind to bring it.

DR. LANFEAR

Why not?

THE PATIENT

I was frightened to. I *thought* you'd get on to me. And I was afraid you'd put me away. They all try to do that. Doctors don't understand us. You're the first. It isn't our fault. I never knew what a drug was until a doctor shoved a needle in me. They start givin' it to ye, and when ye've got so far that ye can't do with-

out it, they turn round an' abuse ye. I hate doctors. An' hospitals. [*Shivers.*] Rotten places. I've had some of 'em. Tried to cure me by not givin' me any. *Cure* me indeed! When I've come out I've wanted it all the more. Hospitals! I'd rather die than go in one again. You won't send me to one, will ye?

DR. LANFEAR

No. I'll take care of you here.

THE PATIENT

[*Gratefully.*] Thank ye, sir. [*Whining again.*] And ye'll give me a little —

DR. LANFEAR

Yes. [*Impatiently.*]

THE PATIENT

I beg yer pardon. [*Chattering and shivering.*] Ye're not like *some* doctors I know. Treat ye like dirt. Say ye ought to be in jail. The dogs. Half of 'em take it themselves too. Nobody asks *them* questions. Oh, no. Got it right at their hand. All they want an' no questions asked. Lucky lot. Wish I'd been brought up a doctor. They keep hypodermic-syringes in their vest pockets. Use 'em as toothpicks, some of 'em. Fine lot an' no mistake. I hate 'em.

[*Enter* DR. COBB *R.*]

DR. COBB

[*Coming in cheerily.*] They've talked themselves out — and off. [*Goes down to* DR. LANFEAR.] What's wrong with him? [*Nodding towards* THE PATIENT.]

DR. LANFEAR

His arm's poisoned. I wish you'd dress it for me with that.

[*Hands him prescription.*]

DR. COBB

[*Looking at prescription.*] Mortified?

DR. LANFEAR

Pretty nearly. I'll open it up in the morning.

[*Picks up* THE PATIENT'S *cap from the floor and gives it to him.*]

Here you are. What is your name?

[*The man turns away and stands miserably twisting the cap in his fingers, he does not answer.*]

Well, give me *any* name. I must put *some* name to you.

THE PATIENT

Hart.

DR. LANFEAR

All right, Mr. Hart, go in there. [*Opens door R. Nods towards* DR. COBB.] He'll take care of you.

THE PATIENT

[*Anxiously.*] I thought *you* were going to?

DR. LANFEAR

I am. Go in.

THE PATIENT

[*Goes to door: turns back to the doctor and pleads.*] You won't forget your promise? You'll give me a little —

DR. LANFEAR

Yes, yes, yes! Go in.

THE PATIENT

Thank ye. Thank ye, sir.

DR. LANFEAR

[*Smiling.*] Don't call me, *sir.* Remember we are *both* professional men.

[THE PATIENT *looks at* DR. LANFEAR *gratefully turns and goes out R.*]

[DR. LANFEAR *closes the door after* THE PATIENT.]

DR. COBB

[*Whistles.*] A "dope"! *

DR. LANFEAR

Yes.

DR. COBB

You certainly find 'em all right. Cocaine?

DR. LANFEAR

And morphine, *and* heroin.

* "Dope." A drug-fiend.

DR. COBB

He's no piker. *What* a face!

DR. LANFEAR

Find out how much he takes usually and give it to him — half morphine, half cocaine. Then we'll start the treatment. Get him to wash and brush the hair back from his eyes. I want to get a good look at him.

DR. COBB

Do you hope to cure *him?*

DR. LANFEAR

I'll try.

DR. COBB

He doesn't look human.

DR. LANFEAR

He *is* though.

DR. COBB

Once a "dope" *always* a "dope."

DR. LANFEAR

[*Shakes his head.*] He was like *us* once.

DR. COBB

[*Indignantly.*] *Us? Me?*

DR. LANFEAR

[*Smiling.*] Well — say like *me.* He had a profession before one of us started him. Go along. Dress his arm — come in and tell me when you've finished.

DR. COBB

He wants more than *that* dressed.

[MRS. LANFEAR, *a kindly, pathetic-looking woman of 50 enters from L.*]

[*Nods pleasantly to her.*] Good evening.

MRS. LANFEAR

Why didn't you come to our party?

DR. COBB

Couldn't. Up to my eyes. I'll look in later, if I may.

MRS. LANFEAR

I wish you would.

DR. COBB

Thank ye. I will. I've got a nice job in here first.

[*Makes a grimace and goes out R.*]

MRS. LANFEAR

You've been so long I thought I'd better come after you.

DR. LANFEAR

I'll go back with you.

MRS. LANFEAR

Kate told me.

DR. LANFEAR

[*Smiling.*] Did she?

MRS. LANFEAR

She came straight to me. She said you were going to tell her father.

DR. LANFEAR

I did.

MRS. LANFEAR

I saw him come back laughing, so I thought it must be all right. Is it?

DR. LANFEAR

I think so.

MRS. LANFEAR

What did he say?

DR. LANFEAR

Abused my profession: abused *me* for not having more *rich* patients — in fact seemed thoroughly against me as a son-in-law — at first.

MRS. LANFEAR

Did you win him round?

DR. LANFEAR

Pretty nearly. I told him what I was trying to do with drug-takers. He seemed to think there might be real money in it — if I get the *wealthy* ones. He said he'd like to cut in on it himself. Taken altogether I have hope.

MRS. LANFEAR

I so much want you to marry Kate. I've known for a long time that you loved her.

DR. LANFEAR

Have you?

MRS. LANFEAR

Yes.

DR. LANFEAR

Why? I've never told you.

MRS. LANFEAR

No, but I've watched you — the way you've looked at her and spoken to her. There's no hiding that.

DR. LANFEAR

Not from you.

[*Puts his arm around her.*]

MRS. LANFEAR

She'll make you a nice comfortable little wife.

DR. LANFEAR

I am sure of it. [*Laughs.*] Especially — *comfortable.*

MRS. LANFEAR

I was rather afraid who you'd pick out. You've made a very happy choice.

DR. LANFEAR

Thank you.

MRS. LANFEAR

I'm very proud of you. You're going to do splendid things. You're only just beginning. That was why I worried. Marriage so often kills ambition at the very start. Yours won't. And I'm very happy. [*Takes his face in her hands and kisses him.*] Good luck. Now we'll go back.

DR. LANFEAR

Wait a minute.

MRS. LANFEAR

We'll talk when they've gone. They'll miss us.

DR. LANFEAR

Listen. [*They listen to the music.*] They seem to be doing very well without us.

MRS. LANFEAR

Well then. Quickly. What is it?

DR. LANFEAR

Mr. Burrows asked me one rather awkward question — about my father.

MRS. LANFEAR

[*Becomes very grave instantly.*] Yes?

DR. LANFEAR

I told him that he was dead, that there had been unhappiness —

MRS. LANFEAR

[*Quickly.*] Why did you tell him that?

DR. LANFEAR

It slipped out. Something he said provoked it.

MRS. LANFEAR

Well?

DR. LANFEAR

You've not told me much, and, as I saw you always avoided speaking about my father, I dropped it. But you've said enough from time to time to show there was something very wrong.

MRS. LANFEAR

There was.

DR. LANFEAR

He must have treated you very badly.

MRS. LANFEAR

He did.

DR. LANFEAR

It would be just as well to tell me the whole thing in case Burrows asks any more questions. It would be better he heard the truth from me than from some one else. It would look as if I was holding it back, wouldn't it?

MRS. LANFEAR

Very well. I'll tell you.

DR. LANFEAR

When he heard there'd been unhappiness he used it as an argument against my marrying Kate. Quoted it as another unhappy marriage.

MRS. LANFEAR

And it was. It was. [*Looks frightenedly at him.*] *Your* marriage mustn't be. There's nothing more wonderful than the companionship of two people who really love each other. There's nothing more horrible than separation when once you have loved. It's like tearing something out of your life by the roots.

DR. LANFEAR

My father left you before he died? [*Pause.*] Did he?

MRS. LANFEAR

[*Nods.*] Yet, badly as he treated me, I had no bitterness in my heart: just sorrow, and pity. I always hoped he'd come back to me.

DR. LANFEAR

Would you have forgiven him?

MRS. LANFEAR

I would. Indeed I would.

DR. LANFEAR

I couldn't.

MRS. LANFEAR

Yes, you could — if you loved. And I did love your father.

DR. LANFEAR

Tell me exactly what happened —

MRS. LANFEAR

Not now.

[*Indicates the people in the next room and then moves towards the door L.*]

DR. LANFEAR

[*Joining her.*] When they've gone then. We'll have a really old-time talk. [*Pause.*] We're not a bit like mother and son. We're pals, aren't we?

MRS. LANFEAR

[*Gently.*] Yes, dear.

DR. LANFEAR

Of course we are. So you must treat me like one. You'll tell me to-night — Pal?

MRS. LANFEAR

[*Nods.*] When they've gone.

DR. LANFEAR

Right.

[*Opens the door for her.*]

MRS. LANFEAR

[*Stopping in the doorway.*] Are you coming with me?

DR. LANFEAR

In two minutes. I've a new drug-patient in there. Cobb's attending to him. I'll just have a look at him and go in to you. Say — if I can cure *him* I'll think no end of myself.

MRS. LANFEAR

[*Interested.*] Can I see him?

DR. LANFEAR

To-morrow. [*Laughs.*] He's not very pretty.

MRS. LANFEAR

Neither was the professor of science when you first brought him here. Yet you let me help you with him from the beginning.

DR. LANFEAR

[*Laughingly.*] If you thought the old professor bad, wait till you see Mr. *Hart*. He's the limit.

MRS. LANFEAR

[*Smiling.*] I really *must* see him.

DR. LANFEAR

Look him over in the morning and give me your diagnosis. I've made mine. We'll see if they agree.

[*Passes her out L. closes the door, then crosses over and opens the door R.1.E., goes in, leaving the door open. The sound of his and* Dr. Cobb's *voices can be heard.*] Ready?

DR. COBB

Yes. I was just going to bring him in.

DR. LANFEAR

Finished?

DR. COBB

Practically.

DR. LANFEAR

Come on.

[*Re-enters and goes to table.*]

[Dr. Cobb *comes in followed by* The Patient.]

[*His face has been washed and the hair brushed back, showing a high, well-developed forehead. His body is nearly straight and the convulsive movements practically under control. The left arm is in a sling. He comes slowly and hesitatingly into the room.*]

[Dr. Cobb *wheels the deep comfortable chair a little forward for the man to sit in.*]

[The Patient *sinks into it with a gasp of relief.*]

DR. COBB

There we are!

DR. LANFEAR

Don't sit like that — all tightened up. Relax. Stretch your legs out. Lie back.

[*The man slowly relaxes and lies back.*]

That's it. Is your arm more comfortable?

THE PATIENT

Yes, thank ye. The pain's almost gone. Makes it feel good. [*Puts his right hand protectingly on the poisoned arm and closes his eyes.*]

[*The two doctors stand looking down at him in silence.*]

[DR. LANFEAR *turns the light slowly on him and watches him intently.*]

DR. COBB

I think I've made a pretty good job of him. He looks much better all cleaned up, doesn't he?

[DR. LANFEAR *beckons* DR. COBB *over to him: speaks to him quietly.*]

DR. LANFEAR

'Phone over for Miss Grant. She can take him nights. Get Miss Fellows in the morning. Have you begun the treatment?

DR. COBB

No. I'd just finished washing and brushing him and doing up his arm when you burst in. I gave him an injection.

DR. LANFEAR

How much?

DR. COBB

Six grains half-and-half. He wanted *ten*. He's a "dope" all right.

DR. LANFEAR

Tell both nurses to mark the chart "hourly." We'll make a complete examination in the morning — I want you with me. We'll keep a daily record of weight, pulse, temperature and blood-pressure. This time next week you'll hardly know him.

DR. COBB

I won't *want* to. I hate the sight of him already.

DR. LANFEAR

[*Smiles.*] Ring up Miss Grant at once. Run along.

DR. COBB

[*Going to door R.U.E.*] These "dopes" give me a pain. Waste of time, that's what it is. Waste of time. [*Exit R.*]

[DR. LANFEAR *opens a drawer, takes out a vial and shakes out a pill: pours some water into a glass, goes to* PATIENT *and shakes him.*]

DR. LANFEAR

Here. Take this.

[THE PATIENT *opens his eyes, swallows the pill and drinks some water.*]

[DR. LANFEAR *takes the glass from him and puts it back on the tray.*]

[*The door L. opens and the sound of voices is heard.*]

[Mrs. Lanfear *brings in* Mrs. Burrows, *a slender, frail, delicate woman of middle-age.*]

[Dr. Lanfear *goes quickly up to them and stops them with a gesture from coming any further into the room.*]

MRS. LANFEAR

Mrs. Burrows wants to see your room, dear.

DR. LANFEAR

Not now. [*Points to* Patient.]

MRS. BURROWS

Oh! I'm so sorry. [*Draws back.*]

MRS. LANFEAR

[*In a whisper.*] Is *that* the new drug-patient?

DR. LANFEAR

Yes.

MRS. LANFEAR

May I look at him?

DR. LANFEAR

Wait till the morning.

MRS. LANFEAR

[*Looking at the man's profile.*] I'll just have a glimpse of him. [*To* Mrs. Burrows.] I always like to

see them when they first come here. It's so wonderful to see what he does with them.

[*Motions to* Mrs. Burrows *to wait for her.*]

[Mrs. Lanfear *creeps down softly and looks at* The Patient, *who has taken up the hand-mirror from the table, and is looking at his reflection in disgust.*]

MRS. BURROWS

[*To* Dr. Lanfear.] I am so glad about you and Kate.

DR. LANFEAR

[*Smiling genially.*] That's nice of you. I was afraid you mightn't approve of me.

MRS. BURROWS

Why not?

DR. LANFEAR

Your husband doesn't seem to.

MRS. BURROWS

[*Smiling wanly.*] We'll change that.

[*While they have been talking* Mrs. Lanfear *has come in line with* The Patient: *at the same moment he sees her reflection in the hand-mirror: he turns quickly and looks up at her. Their eyes meet — a gleam of recognition shines in both. He half rises from the chair, then sinks back, staring at her.* Mrs. Lanfear *looks down at him in horror.*]

DR. LANFEAR

[*Turns to his mother.*] Come, take Mrs. Burrows back.

[MRS. LANFEAR *stands white and still. She sways as if about to faint.*]

[DR. LANFEAR *hurries down to her.*]

What is the matter?

[*Takes her arm and leads her up to* MRS. BURROWS.] I shouldn't have let you see him. [*To* MRS. BURROWS.] Please take her in.

[*Passes them both out and closes the door.*]

[*He goes down to the table, takes up writing-pad, dips a pen in the ink-well and prepares to make notes.*]

[THE PATIENT *is huddled in the chair motionless, staring straight before him.*]

While we are waiting for the nurse, I want you to give me a few more particulars about yourself, and to verify the notes I've got here. I want the *truth.* Now, first of all —

CURTAIN

END OF ACT I

Crisis

ACT II

The same scene, a little later.

THE PATIENT *is stretched full length on the Chesterfield, perfectly limp.* DR. COBB *and* DR. LANFEAR *are standing behind and at the side of the sofa watching him. After a few moments* THE PATIENT *takes a deep breath, then mutters to himself.*

DR. COBB

He's coming back.

[DR. LANFEAR *nods.*]

DR. COBB

Half-starved.

DR. LANFEAR

[*Nods again, closely watching* THE PATIENT.]

[THE PATIENT *opens his eyes and looks at the two men — then glances fearfully round the room.*]

DR. COBB

Hello, where have you been?

THE PATIENT

I dunno. Slipped off, didn't I?

DR. COBB

You certainly took the count. Dead to the world. You need a good steak in you.

THE PATIENT

No, I don't. [*Looks around the room, afraid.*] Hate meat. Any one else in the room?

DR. COBB

No, why?

THE PATIENT

Did I see a woman in here? Or was I dreaming?

DR. COBB

You must have been. [*Looks at* DR. LANFEAR.]

THE PATIENT

[*Shivers.*] Rotten dream. Got me here. [*Touches his heart.*]

DR. LANFEAR

There were two women in the room five minutes ago.

THE PATIENT

[*Quickly.*] Were there?

DR. LANFEAR

Yes.

THE PATIENT

Did one of them come down here and look at me?

DR. LANFEAR

Yes.

THE PATIENT

I was starin' at meself in a glass and I saw her face. I turned round an' she was standin' there lookin' down at me. That right?

DR. LANFEAR

Yes.

THE PATIENT

Thought I must have dreamt it. Tall?

[DR. LANFEAR *nods.*]

THE PATIENT

Grey hair?

DR. LANFEAR

Yes.

THE PATIENT

[*Thinks a moment, his eyes distended. Then asks in a whisper.*] Who is she?

DR. LANFEAR

My mother.

THE PATIENT

[*Looks up at him.*] Your mother?

DR. LANFEAR

Yes.

THE PATIENT

That's funny.

DR. LANFEAR

Why?

THE PATIENT

She looked like some one I knew a long time ago.

DR. LANFEAR

Oh?

THE PATIENT

She was younger then. Brown hair and — and — laughing eyes. A child she was — just a child.

[*Mutters to himself. Nothing audible comes from his lips. He seems to have forgotten the two men. Presently he lies back and closes his eyes.*]

[DR. LANFEAR *turns the electric lamp off so that the light does not fall on* THE PATIENT. *He then beckons to* DR. COBB *and instructs him.*]

DR. LANFEAR

Put him in the end room. Get Mason to see to it and give him some supper. Let me know when the nurse comes. [*Nods toward door L.*] I must go in and say good-bye to them.

DR. COBB

[*Points to* THE PATIENT.] You've got a beauty this time, a real beauty.

[DR. LANFEAR *motions to* COBB *to go.*]

DR. COBB

It's waste of time, medicine and good food — and you know it.

DR. LANFEAR

Some day you'll believe in me.

DR. COBB

I believe in you all right. But, for goodness' sake why don't you get some *live* ones who'll do you credit when you've straightened them out. What's *he* going to be like if you cure him? Why don't you let him alone? He's happy enough when he gets what he wants — a good jolt of "dope." He was cheery as a bird in there when I gave him one just now. You want to take away from him the only thing the poor wretch gets any fun out of. What are you going to give him in its place?

DR. LANFEAR

What he had before he started taking drugs — his self-respect.

DR. COBB

Self-respect! Him? [*Laughs.*] You're a wonder.

DR. LANFEAR

[*Laughs good-naturedly with him, slaps him on the back and pushes him toward the door R.U.E.*] Wake Mason up if he's turned in.

DR. COBB

All right.

[*Goes out R.U.E.*]

[DR. LANFEAR *thinks; walks over and looks at* THE PATIENT. *The man's eyes are closed and he is breathing easily.* DR. LANFEAR *goes out noiselessly L.*]

[*As soon as the door closes* THE PATIENT *opens his eyes, straightens up, gets his feet on to the floor and listens intently. He satisfies himself that he is alone. He rises, looks about as though searching for something; sees the mirror on the table, picks it up, sits in the same chair he was in when* MRS. LANFEAR *came down to him, looks in the mirror, turns round and looks up just as he did when he saw* MRS. LANFEAR. *Thinks, then, apparently, makes up his mind. He puts the mirror back on the table, then looks about on the floor for something. Thinks again, looks towards door R.1.E. Hurries across and goes into the room R. Reappears with his cap in his hand, closes the door R. very softly. Moves up to back, looks undecidedly from the doors L. to the door R.U.E. Remembers the way he came in and steals softly over to the door R.U.E.*]

[MRS. LANFEAR *comes in quickly through the doors L.U.E. and closes them.* THE PATIENT *turns at the sound. They stand looking at each other a few moments in silence.*]

THE PATIENT

[*Comes a little forward, looking at* MRS. LANFEAR *in horror — then he mutters hoarsely.*] You! It *is* you.

MRS. LANFEAR

[*Faintly.*] You've come back to me. You've come back to me at last! I knew you would. I knew you would.

THE PATIENT

Whose house is this?

MRS. LANFEAR

Mine.

THE PATIENT

Yours? I came to see a doctor.

MRS. LANFEAR

My son?

THE PATIENT

Your son? *Here?* Your son?

MRS. LANFEAR

Our son.

THE PATIENT

[*Stares at her; then fully realises as he recalls questioning the doctor. He whispers.*] Our son. *He!* [*Covers his eyes and moans.*]

MRS. LANFEAR

Didn't you know I was here?

THE PATIENT

No. I never thought I'd see you again. I hoped you'd never see me — like this.

MRS. LANFEAR

Then why did you come here? What did you want with him?

THE PATIENT

To doctor *this* — for charity. [*Touches his arm.*]

MRS. LANFEAR

Charity?

THE PATIENT

I came with a letter to him to help me — for charity. I'd nothing to pay him with. I didn't know who he was.

MRS. LANFEAR

But when you heard the name —?

THE PATIENT

The letter was to Dr. Cobb. He brought me in here. I heard no name.

MRS. LANFEAR

Didn't he ask for yours?

THE PATIENT

Yes; but I wouldn't give it. I haven't used it for years. I wouldn't let any one know who I was. Oh, no, not me! I'd *that* much pride left — not me own name. Oh, no! It was respected once. People looked up to me once — before I dropped to *this*. You know that.

What do you think they call me now? "The Wreck." And I am. A digger in filth. A bit of life's wreckage.

[*Pause.*]

"The Wreck!" that's what I'm called. *Me,* with the game in me hand once. A beautiful wife — an' a beautiful home, an' a beautiful child — an' a beautiful career. All gone. Like this now. Oh, no, nobody knows me name. You and he are safe. Never use it. No right to it. I've fouled it — and me body.

[*Pause.*]

Our son! [*Groans.*] *My* son! [*Straightens up.*] But he'll never know. I've done you enough harm. Not that — not as low as that. I'm goin' out as I came an' he'll never be the wiser.

MRS. LANFEAR

You will stay here.

THE PATIENT

No, I won't. [*Angrily.*] I tell ye I won't. He mustn't see me again. He mustn't know he's got a thing like me for a father. He's just beginning. I'm finished. Fancy! I was like him once — not to look at. He's more like you. I mean I had hope and strength an' I wanted to do things. Just like him! He's a clean, straight fellow, too — an' kind. Knew in a flash what was the matter with me. Was goin' to cure me. Said he'd drive the poison out an' make me clean. Ye'll never tell him, will ye?

MRS. LANFEAR

Yes, I will.

THE PATIENT

[*Indignantly.*] It 'ud be a rotten thing to do. Crush him like that at the start.

MRS. LANFEAR

It wouldn't crush him.

THE PATIENT

He'd never lift his head up.

MRS. LANFEAR

You mustn't think that.

THE PATIENT

I don't *think* it; I *know* it. I've seen it before with a pal of mine. We used to hunt together. He was just as low as I am. *His* boy found him and what did he do? Blew his brains out. That's what he did. Couldn't face it. *My* boy isn't going to do that — not if I can help it. He's never known me. He never *will* know me. Did you ever tell him — about me?

MRS. LANFEAR

No. I said you were dead.

THE PATIENT

Good job, too. Well, I'll stay dead.

MRS. LANFEAR

He is giving his life to saving people from the drug-habit. He'll save you.

THE PATIENT

Fine chance to save me. *Me!* [*Derisively.*] I'm too old a bird to be saved. Lots have tried. No use — can't be done.

MRS. LANFEAR

He's not had a failure yet.

THE PATIENT

Well, I won't spoil his record. Nothing 'ud cure me. An' I don't know as I *want* to be either.

[*Mutters to himself, without looking at her.*]

MRS. LANFEAR

[*Looking at him sadly.*] Haven't you a kind thought or word for me?

THE PATIENT

No. I hardly know ye. Yer like some one's come out of some other life.

MRS. LANFEAR

Let us think back to that other life.

THE PATIENT

Think back? Not me! I'm quite miserable enough without that. Have ye had a good look at me, eh?

[*Goes to table and turns on the lamp so that it shines full on his face.*] Look!

[*Waits, as she looks at him.*]

Do ye want to "think back" now?

MRS. LANFEAR

I am always doing that — thinking of the days when I was happy — with you.

THE PATIENT

[*Shivers.*] I don't. Gives me the horrors. Ye don't know what I've been since then. Ye don't know what I've *done*. But ye can see what I *am*.

MRS. LANFEAR

I remember what you *were*. Give our son a chance to save you.

THE PATIENT

I tell ye it wouldn't be fair. What would he think? What would he say? What would he *do*? [*Shivers.*] Oh, no!

MRS. LANFEAR

He is as you were — when we were together.

THE PATIENT

[*Looking back across the years — he whispers, almost as if it were a prayer.*] God help me.

MRS. LANFEAR

He *will* help you.

THE PATIENT

[*Ferociously.*] Oh, no, He won't. He's forgotten me. The only times I've spoken His name for twenty years have been to blaspheme it.

MRS. LANFEAR

He is merciful.

THE PATIENT

He's forgotten me, I tell you.

MRS. LANFEAR

He made you in His likeness.

THE PATIENT

His likeness! Look at me. *God's* work — and *Man's.*

MRS. LANFEAR

It was the test He put you through!

THE PATIENT

Oh, I've been tested all right. An' how have I come out? I'm seamed and scarred through and through. Rotten at heart, rotten in soul. There's not a clean thought or impulse in me mind. I've been livin' in hell. That's what I've been doin'! Years of it. And all the time I've drugged me thoughts and me conscience. Just now they began to waken — through him. The first kindness any one has shown me for years. They've all despised me. An' why shouldn't they? What's the good

of a creature like me, anyway? Yet he seemed to think there was. He offered to lift me up. Give me back me soul. Soul! Lost long ago. It's only when your soul's lost that you can drug and foul yourself. Ye don't care then. *I* didn't. Till just now. Just for a minute I thought I had a chance. But it's no use.

[*He goes on muttering inaudibly. After a while she speaks.*]

MRS. LANFEAR

Why did you leave me?

THE PATIENT

Do you want to know?

MRS. LANFEAR

Yes.

THE PATIENT

When I tell ye ye won't want me to stay.

MRS. LANFEAR

Yes, I will.

THE PATIENT

I left ye because if I'd stayed I'd have killed ye.

MRS. LANFEAR

[*In horror.*] Oh! Why?

THE PATIENT

Ye remember when I got better after I'd been ill and I still wanted morphine?

MRS. LANFEAR

Yes, indeed I do.

THE PATIENT

You used to reason with me — just as ye did when before that I'd drink too much?

[Mrs Lanfear *nods.*]

THE PATIENT

I didn't mind ye talking about the drink. I could stop it whenever I had any hard work to do. It never got any real hold of me.

MRS. LANFEAR

I know.

THE PATIENT

But the morphine I *couldn't* stop. I tried to over and over again. It was no good. I always had to go back to it — and especially when I had big work on hand — that's where it's different to drink. It had a firm grip on me an' wouldn't let go. I went to the doctor who first injected it into me — who started me on it — the man who is responsible for me being like this — I went to him and begged him to cure me. I'd do anything he told me — suffer anything if only I could get free. He told me there was no cure. I had to do it myself; that it was just weakness on my part giving way to it. I should stop it gradually. He'd cursed me with a habit and yet could do nothing to stop it. He didn't know when he gave me the stuff that it couldn't be stopped: that I

couldn't leave it off. Just Ignorance — that's what it was. Just ignorance. And hundreds like him. [*Fiercely.*] These men should be tried in open court and put away where they can't break men's lives.

[*Pause.*]

Well, I did me best to break it off gradually. No use. My whole body would ache for it. I couldn't do a stroke of work without it. Me brain wouldn't act without morphine. Then I got ashamed of it. I couldn't bear you to look at me. I knew what you were thinking — and *you* didn't know what I was suffering. Finding I couldn't stop it gradually I tried private cures through advertisements — things to take at home where no one could see ye. Fine things they were! Several times I thought I was cured. I didn't need morphine. I'd go wecks without it. So long as I took the "cure" I felt no ill-effects. Then when I'd stop the "cure" the same horrible pains would come back, and I'd fly to morphine again. I've only found out since *why* they never cured me. The "*cures*" *contained morphine* mixed with some other harmless medicine. They were *giving* me the poison to *cure* the poison. They make fortunes that way, the heartless thieves! One day I gave up the struggle. I'd grown to hate going home, to loathe meeting you, to dread seeing the boy. All decency was slowly and surely leaving me. I knew the crash would come some day. The edge of my brain was dulled and my partners and clients were noticing it. I lost several big cases. I made up my mind to get away before I did

something that would bring disgrace on you and the boy. By that time I was half crazed. I put all my affairs in order. Settled what I thought fair on you in case that I couldn't touch it, and, with what I had left, a complete "get-away." Left no trace where I was goin'. I meant, if ever I could fight the habit to a finish I would come back. But I couldn't fight it. I spent six months in a sanitarium. They told me they were sure they could cure me. They'd take it away from me little by little. They charged me fifty dollars a week, and when my funds got low they turned me out with just as much craving for the drug as I had when I went in. I went from bad to worse. I lost or spent everything. I'd go for weeks without one sane moment. I had the *morphine-mind*. Then I broke down altogether. They put me in a hospital. I couldn't get any there. They thought it would cure me. Cure! Directly I got out I ran to the first place I knew I could get some. Now I'd throw myself under a train rather than go to a hospital and lie there sweating and groaning and aching for even *one* grain — yes, *half* a grain — even the look of the needle! No more hospitals for me. You're better dead than in one of 'em — at least men like me are.

MRS. LANFEAR

I'd have helped you to fight it if you'd only trusted me.

THE PATIENT

A morphine-maniac does not trust any one decent. You only reminded me of what I was before I fell. You

were a constant, silent reproach to me. And I hated you — yes, I did. Time and time again as we sat looking at each other across the table I wanted to hurt you. To scream out curses at ye — to make ye feel something of the hell I was suffering.

MRS. LANFEAR

If I'd only known!

THE PATIENT

Just as well ye didn't. Ye wouldn't have understood. No sane, healthy person can understand a drug-fiend! That's why we cling together. Everybody's against us. Very well — we stick by each other. I've closed the eyes of many a poor "dope." When my time comes one of 'em 'll do it for me — unless I'm in jail or hospital. [*Fiercely.*] Curse that doctor who first put the stuff into me veins. May he burn in torment — may he —

MRS. LANFEAR

Don't, don't.

THE PATIENT

He put something into me that's been one long torture not only of me body, but of me mind. A rotten poison that maddens the brain and withers the body. Look what it's done for me! Destroyed ambition, honour, my love for you an' for me boy — everything that once made life for me. All — all — left me. Just this now — just this till I end it — if I ever have the pluck to end it! I've often tried. No use! Not enough

decency left even for that. I've reached the dregs. Our son was right when he said I was in the depths.

MRS. LANFEAR

Then out of the depths cry up to your Maker.

THE PATIENT

He wouldn't hear me. Not He!

MRS. LANFEAR

I'll pray with you!

THE PATIENT

Prayer! From me! It'd sound like blasphemy!

MRS. LANFEAR

Let me tend you, watch over you, help you. We've neither of us much longer to live. The only happiness I've had since I first met and married you has been whilst I was with you, and, after you left me, my memory of you. That — and caring for our son. I will be happy caring for you.

THE PATIENT

No, I won't let you do that.

[MRS. LANFEAR *puts her hand on his arm.*]

You mustn't touch me.

[*She tries to speak to him.*]

Nor speak to me. [*Covers his face.*] Or look at me. I'm just a lost soul! Lost! Wrecked!

MRS. LANFEAR

You're my husband. Let me love the best that is in you. Let us destroy the worst.

THE PATIENT

[*Looks long at her — he softens.*] Ye've not changed much, have ye? Yer grey, that's all. An' the laugh's gone from yer eyes. Ye were just a child then, weren't ye?

MRS. LANFEAR

[*Her eyes filling.*] Yes.

THE PATIENT

Remember how we used to sit up plannin' things?

[MRS. LANFEAR *nods.*]

THE PATIENT

When I had a big case ye'd hunt up the books for me an' find the places in 'em an' ye'd sit there while I worked, quiet as a mouse. An' ye were always so sure of me. I'd be a judge some day, ye used to say. An' I would have been, too — a judge — that's what I'd have been. What a muck! Then the baby came. I remember standin' outside yer door — in the middle of the night it was — an' hearin' it cry an' wonderin' if you were saved — an' sobbin' me heart out with joy an' laughin' at the same time when I knew ye *were*.

[*His lips go on moving, but no sound comes: he is quite stooped now, his right hand swinging helplessly in*

front of him. MRS. LANFEAR *takes the free hand in both of hers and they stand in silence, tears streaming down their faces.*]

[DR. LANFEAR *comes in through doors L.* MRS. LANFEAR *drops* THE PATIENT'S *hand and turns to her son.*]

DR. LANFEAR

[*To his mother.*] What are you doing here?

[*The moment* THE PATIENT *hears* DR. LANFEAR'S *voice he rouses himself and walks unsteadily towards the door R.U.E.*]

DR. LANFEAR

Where are you going?

THE PATIENT

[*Roughly.*] I don't want to stay here.

DR. LANFEAR

Why not?

THE PATIENT

I don't want to. That's all. I'm goin'.

DR. LANFEAR

Changed your mind, eh?

THE PATIENT

[*Loudly.*] That's what I have. Changed me mind.

DR. LANFEAR

You don't want to be cured?

THE PATIENT

No. I want to go.

DR. LANFEAR

Don't you think you're very foolish?

THE PATIENT

Don't care whether I am or not. No business of yours.

DR. LANFEAR

It is my business. You're not going out of this room. [THE PATIENT *makes an unsteady lurch towards the door.* DR. LANFEAR *steps in front of him.*]

MRS. LANFEAR

[*Hysterically.*] You mustn't let him go! We must keep him here — we must! [*Grips* DR. LANFEAR *by the arm and holds on to him.*] It's come to pass! It's come to pass! I knew it would! I knew it would! I knew it would! He's come back to me! He's come back to me!

DR. LANFEAR

[*Quite puzzled, not understanding in the least, looks questioningly into his mother's eyes.*] Come back to you? [*Repeats as some faint idea of what she means breaks in on him.*] Come back to you?

MRS. LANFEAR

Yes, to me, to *us!*

DR. LANFEAR

[*Turns quickly and looks at* THE PATIENT. *Turns back to his mother and pointing in disgust at* THE PATIENT.] *That?*

MRS. LANFEAR

Yes.

DR. LANFEAR

[*Unable to believe it.*] *My father?*

MRS. LANFEAR

Yes.

DR. LANFEAR

[*Stunned, pressing his forehead with his open palms.*] You told me he was dead!

MRS. LANFEAR

I know I did. He's been dead to me. But — he's come back to us.

DR. LANFEAR

[*In horror.*] No, no! Oh, no! Not *that!*

[THE PATIENT *cowers down: gradually the convulsive twitchings come back to him. The effect of the injection is beginning to wear off.*]

MRS. LANFEAR

Go to him! Speak to him!

DR. LANFEAR

I can't believe it! I can't believe it!

[*Shudders in disgust and turns away from his father with a gesture as though he would shut him for ever out of his sight.*]

THE PATIENT

[*To* Mrs. Lanfear.] I told you not to tell him. Ye see what ye've done? What else could ye expect? My pal all over again. *His* son did just what he's doin'. If ye saw into his mind [*Points to* Dr. Lanfear.] he's thinking the same, too. [*To* Dr. Lanfear.] Don't be afraid. I won't bother ye. Rotten luck my comin' in here to-night! Just rotten luck for all of us. Not much harm done. Except yer pride. Won't think so much of yerself now ye've seen what ye sprang from, will ye? Don't fear. No one'll be any the wiser. I won't tell. [*Turns to door* R.U.E.]

MRS. LANFEAR

[*To her son.*] You mustn't let him go. [*Waits — she pleads again.*] Don't let him go — please don't!

DR. LANFEAR

[*Turns round and says peremptorily.*] Come here.

THE PATIENT

What's the use? Ye couldn't keep me here now. I wouldn't look at a dog the way you looked at me.

DR. LANFEAR

[*Authoritatively.*] Come here.

[*Something in the doctor's tone cows* THE PATIENT. *He drags himself slowly down to* DR. LANFEAR *stooped and cringing; his body bending forward and trying to straighten itself again and again.*]

DR. LANFEAR

[*Looking down at him.*] And you're my father!

[*The man covers his eyes in shame and abasement.*]

DR. LANFEAR

What is this poison that can turn a human being into such a thing as you? What is its purpose? Why do we use it at all? To relieve pain. Why, weigh all the pain in the world against such a horror as it has made of you and it would be better that all humanity should suffer. From now no drug ever goes into a human body through me. [*Turns to his mother.*] One of *us* caused that! One of *us*. A doctor! And there are thousands more like him. Misshapen, brutish, warped mentally, diseased physically, dragging their way through corruption, creeping out at night afraid to face the sun, ashamed to look their fellow-creatures in the eye: waiting until death takes them out of their misery to go crushed and unclean and terrified before their Maker. [*With a great gesture of horror he moves restlessly about the room.*] It isn't *their* fault, it isn't *his*. It's *ours*. *We* are to blame. *They* know nothing of the risk they run when they are first given the poison. Few *doctors* do. *But I am going to see that they do.* I am

going to start a movement through this country to expose the whole rottenness of such ignorance. If a doctor gives a man an over-dose of poison the doctor is prosecuted and punished. But he can put all the opium and cocaine poison he likes into a man or a woman and the law punishes the *patient*. I am going to see that *we* shoulder our share of the blame if it takes the rest of my life.

THE PATIENT

I'd like to crucify the brute who first gave it to me: crucify him, I would.

DR. LANFEAR

[*Looks down at his father: he shows in his manner the swift change from disgust to pity. He puts his hands round his father's shoulders.*] My poor, poor father.

THE PATIENT

[*Suddenly breaks all restraint and throws himself on the ground at his son's feet and clutches at his knees with his right hand, crying hysterically.*] Save me! save me! I'll do anything you tell me — anything! Only take this curse from me. Make me a man again — not a beast! Give me back conscience and brain and soul. Save me! Save me! Oh! Save me!

DR. LANFEAR

[*Pityingly and tenderly.*] I will, I will. I've fought with the poison for others and beaten it. I'll drive it

from you. [*Raises his father up from the ground.*] I'll save you.

[*The two men go on talking together amid sobs and broken hysterical ejaculations.*]

THE PATIENT

It wasn't my fault, indeed it wasn't!

DR. LANFEAR

I know, I know!

THE PATIENT

I *have* tried! Really, I have!

DR. LANFEAR

I am sure you have.

THE PATIENT

I didn't know what it was — or I'd never have let him give it to me — indeed I wouldn't.

DR. LANFEAR

Of course you wouldn't.

THE PATIENT

But I'll beat it. You see if I don't. I'll beat it. If you'll help me?

DR. LANFEAR

We'll beat it together.

[*They talk rapidly, overlapping each other,* THE PATIENT *clinging to his son, who tries to quiet him.*]

[Mrs. Lanfear *watches and listens, tears streaming down her face.*]

[Burrows *comes in from L.U.E. overcoat on and hat in hand.* Dr. Lanfear *puts his father down on the Chesterfield the moment the doors open.*]

BURROWS

[*To* Dr. Lanfear.] Well, you're a fine host, I must say. [*To* Mrs. Lanfear.] Been lookin' for ye all over the place. [*Sees* The Patient.] Hello! Didn't know ye had a sick person here or I wouldn't have come in. [*To* Mrs. Lanfear.] Good-bye. Mother and the girl are putting their things on. Had a lovely evenin'. [*Looks at* Dr. Lanfear.] Except when I came in here — before. Lovely evenin'. Didn't like yer music, but ye had just the game of whist I like. They let me win once in a while. [*Shakes hands with* Dr. Lanfear.] Drop round and see me sometime. We'll go into that thing. There ought to be real money in it. Go after it. [*Looks at* The Patient.] One o' the poor ones, eh?

DR. LANFEAR

Yes.

BURROWS

Now you cut that out. What's Belle Vue Hospital for?

THE PATIENT

[*From the moment he first hears* Burrows's *voice has been glaring at him malignantly: his face and fingers*

twitching furiously. At the mention of Belle Vue Hospital he springs up with a scream: all the sordidness and degradation of his surroundings for years comes out in his coarse speech and common abuse.] Belle Vue? Belle Vue, eh? It's men like you keep it full. Men like you! Blast you and your kind. I know you. "Cast-iron Burrows" they call ye. An' yer well named. I've worked for ye. [*Turns to* Dr. Lanfear.] Yes, I've worked for him. An' when I got hurt the foreman said I was drunk and had me "pinched." Yes, he did. Sent for a "cop" and had me "pinched," the dirty blackguard! Drunk! Me! I've not tasted a drop of drink for twenty years. *Starved* — that's what I was — starved. An' he had me put in Belle Vue as an "alcoholic." Didn't even pay me the little money was comin' to me. [*Turning on* Burrows.] Ye dog! But there'll be a reckonin' with you and the lot like ye. That's what there'll be — a reckonin'. Ye can't stamp on us always — that ye can't. It'll come. They'll strip yer money from ye an' throw ye to rot in jail where there's lots like ye already. I've sent a few up meself in my time. Ye damned thieves! Ye damned heartless brutes and thieves. [*Makes a rush at* Burrows, *screaming.*] Ye'd send me to Belle Vue again, would ye?

DR. LANFEAR

[*Holding* The Patient *firmly, speaking to* Burrows.] You'd better go.

THE PATIENT

I'll get you yet — you —

DR. LANFEAR

[*Angrily to* PATIENT.] Stop! Do you hear? Stop! [*Motions* BURROWS *to go.*]

BURROWS

Oh, I'm going all right. Don't suppose I'll stay here and hear any more of that stuff, do ye?

THE PATIENT

[*Struggling with* DR. LANFEAR.] Heartless thieves — that's what ye are!

[DR. LANFEAR *forces the man over to the Chesterfield and puts him down onto it and stands over him.*]

BURROWS

[*To* DR. LANFEAR.] So *he's* the kind ye waste yer time on, eh?

DR. LANFEAR

He is.

BURROWS

One of yer drug-takers?

DR. LANFEAR

Yes.

BURROWS

Think you'll cure him?

DR. LANFEAR

I mean to.

BURROWS

What'll ye do with him if ye do? Turn him out on us again, eh? He ought to be in the penitentiary doin' somethin' useful. That kind of man oughtn't to be at large.

[The Patient, *with an angry growl tries to struggle up.* Dr. Lanfear *holds him firmly down on the Chesterfield.*]

DR. LANFEAR

[*To* Burrows.] He'll not be turned out on the community again. He will stay with me. He's my father.

BURROWS

[*Aghast.*] Your father?

DR. LANFEAR

Yes.

BURROWS

Ye just told me he was dead.

DR. LANFEAR

I thought he was.

BURROWS

Well, he might just as well be by the look of him. He'd be a sight better off. I'm glad I've seen him.

Very glad. I'll not forget him in a hurry, I can tell ye.

DR. LANFEAR

You've said enough. Good night.

BURROWS

Said *enough?* No, I haven't. Not *half* enough. Why, that —

[DR. LANFEAR *motions to his mother to show* BURROWS *out.* MRS. LANFEAR *goes to doors L. and beckons to* BURROWS.]

BURROWS

[*Goes to door — suddenly swings round.*] Say — you'd better look somewhere else for a wife if *that's* "Exhibit A" in yer family. It's the last time I'll come here and — see — I think you'd better keep away from us.

[*Enter* MRS. BURROWS *and* KATE, *dressed for the street.*]

KATE

[*To* BURROWS.] What are you shouting about? They can hear you in the hall.

BURROWS

Let them.

KATE

[*Goes to* LANFEAR.] What's the matter?

BURROWS

[*To* KATE.] Come here.

DR. LANFEAR

[*Very white and agitated, standing well in front of* THE PATIENT *to screen him from* KATE.] Go with him, dear. I'll see you to-morrow.

BURROWS

No, you won't. Not to-morrow, nor any other day. You keep away. [*To* KATE.] If I find you seeing him again I'll pack you off to the country.

KATE

Oh, no, you won't. I'll see him just as often as I like.

BURROWS

What?

KATE

Not so loud. I am only a few feet away. [*To* DR. LANFEAR.] What is he so noisy about? Because we're going to be married?

BURROWS

That's *one* thing, and you're not going to be either.

KATE

Oh, yes, I am.

MRS. BURROWS

[*Interposing.*] My dear —

KATE

[*To her Mother.*] You can let him bully you if you like. But he's not going to bully *me* any longer. I've had enough of it.

BURROWS

[*Grimly.*] Oh! Have you?

KATE

I have. You can bellow at your workmen and my mother because they're depending on you. I'm not.

BURROWS

So, yer bent on marrying him, are ye?

KATE

I am.

BURROWS

Then ye'd better meet yer future father-in-law. [*To* DR. LANFEAR.] Why don't ye introduce them?

KATE

[*To* DR. LANFEAR.] What does he mean?

DR. LANFEAR

[*Very distressed, faintly.*] I'll tell you to-morrow.

BURROWS

[*To* KATE.] Ye'd better know to-night, my dear. Give ye something to sleep on. [*Points to* THE PATIENT.] *There* he is.

KATE

[*Looks down at* THE PATIENT, *writhing and twisting: the drug has completely worn off. She looks at him for some moments as if hardly able to believe it. Then she looks up at* DR. LANFEAR. *She asks in a whisper.*] Is he?

DR. LANFEAR

[*Very quietly.*] Yes.

[KATE *sways as if she were about to faint: covers her eyes with her hands and shivers and chatters.*]

[MRS. BURROWS *goes to her and puts her arms around her.* DR. LANFEAR *signs to his mother to take them away.* MRS. LANFEAR *leads* MRS. BURROWS *and* KATE *up and out through the doors L.U.E.* BURROWS *follows them out.* DR. LANFEAR *goes up and closes the doors. He walks down anxious and worried as the scene that has just taken place passes through his mind.*]

THE PATIENT

[*Looks up at the Doctor timidly.*] Sorry I broke out. I couldn't help it. Ye don't know what I suffered in Belle Vue — all through him. The brute! Fell off one of his girders, I did. Nearly broke me hip. In case they were held responsible the foreman handed me over to a "cop." Drunk, he said. That's the way they treat us when we get down. Stamp on us. Sorry I broke out. I'll never do it again — never!

DR. LANFEAR

Don't talk about it.

THE PATIENT

[*Whining and writhing to and fro.*] Ye won't turn me out because I did it?

DR. LANFEAR

No.

THE PATIENT

An' ye'll take care of me?

DR. LANFEAR

Yes.

THE PATIENT

Yerself?

DR. LANFEAR

Yes.

THE PATIENT

Ye won't send me to a hospital?

DR. LANFEAR

No. [*Walks away thinking.*]

THE PATIENT

Thank ye. [*Looks at* DR. LANFEAR, *whose back is to him. Then he looks down at his own rags, at his coarse hands, feels his wounded arm. Then he says hoarsely.*] How ye must be ashamed of me.

DR. LANFEAR

[*Goes to* THE PATIENT *and puts his hands on the man's shoulder.*] Don't think that.

THE PATIENT

[*Crying and snuffling.*] An' why shouldn't ye be? "The Wreck." That's what I am. They all know me. All the "dopes." I'm the King of 'em. None of 'em have been at it so long as I have. Can take more than any of 'em, too. Yes, I can. Pretty nearly *twice* as much.

[DR. LANFEAR *sits beside him, thinking.*]

[*After a little the man rambles on.*] Last night I slept on the steps of a Club in 44th Street. The cleaners kicked me off at six this mornin'. Then I wandered round the ash-barrels to see what I could find. Begged a dime off a drunken man an' had some coffee an' cake. I hate meat: never eat it now. Sweet coffee an' cakes. That's me. Six lumps of sugar if I can get 'em — if they're not watchin'. An' cakes all coated in sugar. They're great. Only times I've ever stole anythin' have been out o' cake shops. That's all. Never hurt any one in me life — except when I had a lot o' "coke" * in me. Just plain coke, or heroin. Drives me crazy, that does. Heroin's the boy, I tell ye. I could fight a regiment if I had a good jolt. I feel as strong. [*Braces his right arm.*] Just as strong as —

* "Coke." Cocaine.

DR. LANFEAR

[*In agony.*] Don't! Don't talk! [*Gets up and walks away.*]

THE PATIENT

[*Cringing.*] All right, I won't. [*Mutters to himself.*] I'd like to have killed *him* just now. Smash his skull. If I'd had enough "coke" in me I'd have done it, too.

[*He stops talking: looks around at* DR. LANFEAR *who has gone up to back.* THE PATIENT *laughs a foolish, eerie, mirthless laugh.*]

Funny, isn't it? Damn funny! "The Wreck" with a clean-limbed, well-dressed, fashionable-looking son like you. Funny as hell! [*Laughs until it dies away in his throat with a cough.*] Nice girl that, too. Crazy about ye. Any one could see that. Sorry she saw me.

[*Pause.*]

[*In a moment he goes on again.*] Last night sleepin' on a stone-step: to-night between clean sheets. Can't believe it. An hour ago a poor "dope," huntin' his meals; not a friend in the world. Now in a *home.* Home. Me wife — an' you.

DR. LANFEAR

[*In distress.*] Stop! Please, please stop!

THE PATIENT

[*Whining again.*] Don't be angry. [*Cries and snivels and strokes his poisoned arm very gently. Goes on*

again.] Know how I got *this?* [*Touches his left arm.*] A month ago it was. I went up into the elevated station at 50th Street and Sixth Avenue an' got behind the door — hardly any one about — and gave meself a "jolt" with the syringe. While the needle was still in a fellow let the swing-door fall back on me an' snapped the needle off in me arm, snapped it right off. I could have smashed him. Rotten luck that was, wasn't it? [*Gently rubs his arm, then begins to tremble and twitch convulsively.*] I've got the horrors. Give me a "jolt," will ye? He didn't give me much in there. It's all gone — all of it. I can stand a lot. More'n any one. [*In a bragging, boasting tone.*] D'ye know I've taken forty grains in one day! *Forty grains in one day!* What do ye think of that? Mixed, of course. Not all "coke." Morphine half of it. *Forty grains!* Very few could take that. *I* did. Ever know any one could take forty grains in one day?

[DR. LANFEAR *goes impatiently to table and takes a powder out of a drawer.*]

THE PATIENT

[*Watching him craftily and anxiously.*] Give me a little? Will ye?

[*Pause.*]

Are ye goin' to give me a little? [*Brightening up.*] Eh?

[DR. LANFEAR *fills a glass with water, goes to* THE PATIENT *and gives him the powder.*]

THE PATIENT

[*Holding up the powder.*] What's this?

DR. LANFEAR

Take it.

THE PATIENT

Anything in it?

DR. LANFEAR

[*Sharply.*] Take it.

THE PATIENT

All right. [*Swallows powder, reaches for glass quickly and gulps some water and coughs, makes a wry face and wipes his mouth with the back of his hand.*] Bitter, ain't it?

DR. LANFEAR

Keep quiet. Don't talk. [*Puts glass back on table and walks about thinking.*]

THE PATIENT

I won't. [*Keeps quiet a few seconds, rubbing his nose two or three times quickly with his forefinger; watches* DR. LANFEAR: *then pleads.*] Give me a little "jolt," will ye? Just a small one? Eh? [*Waits, twitches and writhes.*] Well, let me have a sniff of "coke"? A quick sniff — [*Coaxing.*] Just for luck, will ye?

DR. LANFEAR

[*Angrily.*] You'll never have any drug from me. Nor will any one else. [*With growing heat.*] Rather than give you any of that poison I'd turn you out into the streets.

THE PATIENT

[*Quailing and crying.*] Don't do that! Don't do that!

DR. LANFEAR

[*Goes to door R.U.E., opens it, goes out and calls.*] Cobb.

DR. COBB

[*In the distance.*] Hello?

DR. LANFEAR

Is the room ready?

DR. COBB

Yes.

DR. LANFEAR

Is the nurse there?

DR. COBB

She's on her way.

DR. LANFEAR

Come in here. I want you.

DR. COBB

Half a minute.

[DR. LANFEAR *re-enters, his face set and hard. He goes down to* THE PATIENT *and looks gloomily at him.*]

THE PATIENT

[*Has been muttering to himself, his eyes closed. He opens them and finds his son looking down at him. He gives a little forced laugh.*] There you are! I'm glad I found ye. Ye're something like a son, you are. You're all right. [*Shivers.*] I'm wet through. [*Shivers again.*] Wringing wet. Feel me?

DR. LANFEAR

I know.

THE PATIENT

Wet as a rag. Got a drop o' brandy? Haven't touched it for — Good Lord, how long is it? Honest, I haven't. Wouldn't mind a drop now. Take these shivers away. Warm me up. May I?

[*Pause.*]

No?

[*Pause.*]

You're a bit rough on your old father, ain't ye?

[*Pause.*]

What have ye given me? Top o' my head's goin' up an' down. [*Laughs a sickly, chuckling cunning laugh.*] You're an artful lot, you doctors, ain't ye? You can give *us* anything you like. But we never know what you give *yerself,* do we? Lord! I feel funny. Honest, I do. Can't keep me eyes open.

[*Pause.*]

Oh, dear, my head —[*Lies back and closes his eyes.*] I would like a little. Just a sniff. It 'ud make me feel good.

[*Pause.*]

My arm doesn't hurt now. Pain all gone. Quite comfortable, quite.

[*Pauses.*]

Everything's all soft an' quiet. I'm glad I found you. Very glad — I — I — [*His voice dies away — he sleeps.*]

[*As* DR. LANFEAR *watches him, in spite of himself, a shudder of repulsion passes through him.*]

[DR. COBB *can be heard humming vigorously down the corridor. He comes into the room.* DR. LANFEAR *checks him with a sign.*]

DR. COBB

Eh? [*Follows the direction of* DR. LANFEAR'S *eyes and sees* THE PATIENT.] Oh! Asleep again?

DR. LANFEAR

Yes.

DR. COBB

"The Wreck," eh? [*As he looks whimsically at* THE PATIENT.]

DR. LANFEAR

What?

DR. COBB

He told me in there he was called that. Good name for him, too.

DR. LANFEAR

It won't be any longer.

DR. COBB

Still hopeful?

DR. LANFEAR

Yes, hopeful and determined.

DR. COBB

I'll tell you what *I* think. If an angel came down from heaven to save that delightful person —

DR. LANFEAR

Don't say anything more. He is my father.

DR. COBB

[*Looks quickly at* DR. LANFEAR, *then at* THE PATIENT *and back again to* DR. LANFEAR — *a flush of shame crimsoning his boyish face.*] I beg your pardon — I had no idea —

DR. LANFEAR

That's all right. Be gentle with him.

DR. COBB

[*Eagerly.*] I'll do anything in the world —

DR. LANFEAR

I know you will.

DR. COBB

I'll say nothing.

DR. LANFEAR

As you please.

DR. COBB

Are you angry with me?

DR. LANFEAR

No. Only don't let us — [*Breaks off — turns away.*]

DR. COBB

[*Looks at him — then impulsively goes to* DR. LANFEAR *and puts his hand affectionately on the doctor's shoulder.*] Oh! I'm so sorry.

DR. LANFEAR

[*Impatiently. Nervously.*] Wheel him in. Put him to bed. I'll be in. [*Stands looking into space, thinking.*]

[DR. COBB *wheels the chair towards the door; it catches against a chair.*]

DR. COBB

Clumsy! [*Looks down anxiously at* THE PATIENT, *who is still fast asleep.*] I thought I'd wakened him.

DR. LANFEAR

I've given him an opiate.

DR. COBB

Here we go.

[*He wheels* THE PATIENT *out through door R.U.E.— as he reaches the door* MRS. LANFEAR *enters through the doors L.U.E. She watches* DR. COBB *wheel the man out. She moves across to follow him.*]

DR. LANFEAR

Don't go in.

MRS. LANFEAR

I want to.

DR. LANFEAR

I'd rather you didn't. Stay here.

[*He crosses over and shuts the door R.U.E.* MRS LANFEAR *sits in the arm chair trembling.*]

DR. LANFEAR

Have they all gone? [*Dully.*]

MRS. LANFEAR

Yes. Kate will ring you up in the morning. [*Taking his tone.*]

DR. LANFEAR

I'll send her a note round presently. [*Sits beside his mother.*]

[*Pause — they both sit thinking. After a while she speaks.*]

MRS. LANFEAR

I am sorry you told Mr. Burrows.

DR. LANFEAR

I'm not. He'd have to know some time.

MRS. LANFEAR

He'll stop the marriage now.

DR. LANFEAR

Don't let us talk about that.

MRS. LANFEAR

[*After a pause — in a whisper.*] Can you cure him?

DR. LANFEAR

If it's possible I will.

MRS. LANFEAR

How long will it take?

DR. LANFEAR

I can't tell yet. I'll know better to-morrow.

MRS. LANFEAR

Will he be all right then?

DR. LANFEAR

I don't know. He's been taking it so long.

MRS. LANFEAR

[*Pauses.*] What's the matter with his arm? Broken?

DR. LANFEAR

Poisoned. That's simple enough.

MRS. LANFEAR

[*Pauses.*] Will he be very ill?

DR. LANFEAR

Quite likely. First few days.

MRS. LANFEAR

[*Timidly.*] May I nurse him?

DR. LANFEAR

No.

MRS. LANFEAR

Please let me.

DR. LANFEAR

[*Shakes his head.*] Not at first. Later on — perhaps.

MRS. LANFEAR

[*Puts her hand on his arm.*] He's my husband, dear.

DR. LANFEAR

That creature isn't your husband. That's a twisted, deformed demon. He hasn't a thought that isn't distorted. [*Gets up, moves about restlessly, throwing his hands above his head.*] It's like being in a mad-house listening to him. [*Makes a gesture as if putting the thought away from him — stops in front of her.*] Is *that* the man you married?

[*Pause.*]

You know it isn't. It's an evil spirit come back in your husband's body.

MRS. LANFEAR

Don't, don't!

DR. LANFEAR

They say there are no miracles. If that foul-looking, evil-talking creature becomes a sane, clean human being again will you believe in them?

MRS. LANFEAR

Yes, dear.

DR. LANFEAR

Then let us pray that he will. This is not just a struggle to save a piece of wreckage. I'm going to try and bring your *husband* back out of that wreck. I'm going to try and bring back my father. [*Suddenly.*] What was he?

MRS. LANFEAR

A lawyer.

DR. LANFEAR

Successful?

MRS. LANFEAR

Very. He had a great future until his illness — when he was first given —

DR. LANFEAR

[*Interrupting.*] Yes, yes — Why didn't you tell me years ago? It wasn't fair — saying he was dead.

MRS. LANFEAR

I was ashamed, dear.

DR. LANFEAR

Ah! That's it. That's the trouble. If people would only understand that there's nothing to be ashamed of in a habit that the person is not responsible for, we wouldn't have one quarter such terrible examples. They hide it and lie about it, as if it were some horrible sin instead of being a habit that yields surely and quickly to intelligent treatment. If he'd stood by you and let you help him he'd never have fallen to this. It's mostly shame that makes degenerates like him.

[*Pause.*]

You shouldn't have told me he was dead. Makes a liar of me to that fellow Burrows.

MRS. LANFEAR

I'm sorry, dear. I know it was wrong. [*In a low heart-broken voice.*] I didn't want you to know your father was — like that.

DR. LANFEAR

[*The patient resignation of her voice melts him — He speaks to her tenderly.*] Go to bed now, dear. Try and get some sleep. Put it out of your mind.

MRS. LANFEAR

I couldn't sleep. [*Shivers.*] Let me stay with you.

[*Enter* DR. COBB *R.U.E.*]

DR. COBB

[*Very quietly.*] The nurse is here.

DR. LANFEAR

All right.

DR. COBB

Coming in?

DR. LANFEAR

Yes.

[DR. COBB *goes out R.U.E.* DR. LANFEAR *goes slowly towards the door R.*]

MRS. LANFEAR

I'll wait for you.

DR. LANFEAR

I may be some time. Try and rest. Go upstairs.

MRS. LANFEAR

[*Shakes her head.*] No, I'd rather wait here. Perhaps you can tell *now*.

DR. LANFEAR

I won't do much to-night. Just start him off right. To-morrow I'll make a thorough examination.

MRS. LANFEAR

[*Looks up at him, her eyes fall, her lips quivering.*] Save him.

DR. LANFEAR

I'll do my best. [*Goes to her, bends down and kisses her on the forehead — then goes to one of the drawers in the table, takes out a vial and a stethoscope.*]

[*He then goes quietly out R.U.E.* Mrs. Lanfear *sits there helplessly, one hand beating against the other, tears streaming down her face, her lips moving but no sound coming from them.*]

[*Very slowly the curtain comes down and hides her.*]

THE END OF ACT II

Salvation

ACT III

A Villa on a promontory overlooking the sea. Through the open windows can be seen cliffs with winding paths leading up to them.

The scene passes in a pleasant, cheerful well-furnished room in the Villa opening on to a flower garden, brilliant with many-hued flowers and with pathway stretching down to the ocean. The colouring of the room is old rose.

DR. LANFEAR *enters in travelling-dress followed by a servant, they are both talking as they enter.*

DR. LANFEAR

How long has he been gone?

SERVANT

It's over an hour since he drove away with Dr. Cobb.

DR. LANFEAR

They ought to be back soon.

[*Taking off his coat, hat and gloves and giving them to the* SERVANT.]

SERVANT

Yes, sir. Never stays out more than an hour, as a rule. But it's a nice day; they may have loitered.

DR. LANFEAR

Is the nurse in?

SERVANT

She was reading a novel when I looked in the room a while ago. I'll see, sir.

DR. LANFEAR

If she's there ask her to bring the chart.

SERVANT

Yes, sir.

DR. LANFEAR

Where's my mother?

SERVANT

Out on the lawn — she *was,* sir.

[DR. LANFEAR *goes out through the windows.* SERVANT *goes out L.*]

[DR. LANFEAR *looks around the garden, locates his mother in the distance and waves to her.*]

DR. LANFEAR

[*Calling.*] Come along in.

[*Comes back into the room, smiling happily, takes out a mass of papers, sits at the bureau and selects one and reads it, putting the others back in his breast pocket.*]

[*The door L. opens and a nurse bustles in, humming vigorously. She is a very attractive, pert, cheeky girl*

of 20. She has a medical chart in her hand. She looks round the room, finally sees DR. LANFEAR.]

NURSE

Oh! *There* you are. You the doctor?

DR. LANFEAR

[*Looks shrewdly at her and holds out his hand for the chart.*] I am.

NURSE

Lanfear?

DR. LANFEAR

Yes.

NURSE

Here you are. [*Hands him the chart.*] Couple of *young* ones — you and Dr. Cobb, aren't you? [*Laughing as she looks down at him.*]

DR. LANFEAR

[*Examining the chart.*] How long have you been here?

NURSE

Came yesterday — all in a hurry. Dr. Cobb sent for me. Said the other had to go. Mother sick — or something. Guess *she* was *sick* — of the job.

DR. LANFEAR

[*Looks up at her.*] Why?

NURSE

Oh, he's a *nut.*

DR. LANFEAR

[*Quietly.*] *Is* he?

NURSE

Sure. Nice one minute and cranky as cranky the next. Nothing right sometimes: others anything'll do. Keeps you guessing. My first case like this. Don't want any more, I can tell you.

DR. LANFEAR

Perhaps you'd rather not attend this one?

NURSE

Oh, I'll do anything *once.*

DR. LANFEAR

Whenever you want to go —

NURSE

[*Quickly.*] I don't want to go — just yet. Rather funny for a change. Didn't know there was anything like him, believe me. We live and learn. Laughs one minute and wants to jump out of the window the next. Never have a dull moment with that sort.

DR. LANFEAR

Where have you worked before?

NURSE

All over. Women mostly. *They're* bad enough — but *him!* Oh! help!

DR. LANFEAR

What's your name? [*Marking the chart.*]

NURSE

Jolliffe. "Jolly" some of them call me. [*Laughs.*] Fresh, aren't they?

DR. LANFEAR

[*Hands the chart back.*] Give him *that* as soon as he comes in, Miss Jolliffe.

NURSE

Sure. Never had a "dope" case before. Lots of 'em, they tell me. [*Settling down for a long talk.*] Why, there was one Dr. Cobb told me of — funny little chap, Dr. Cobb, isn't he — the fellow had been —

DR. LANFEAR

[*Rising and closing the discussion.*] Let me know if you're dissatisfied. I don't want unwilling people working for me.

NURSE

Oh, I'm *willing* all right. Only it does give you the jumps at first. Daresay I'll like it after a bit. It's all in a life.

DR. LANFEAR

That will do.

NURSE

[*Cheerfully.*] Right you are.

[*Goes out L. singing.*]

"Dancing teacher tell me how you dance the fox-trot
Ye got to watch your step!"

[MRS. LANFEAR *comes in through the windows.*]

[DR. LANFEAR *goes to her and greets her.*]

DR. LANFEAR

You got my wire?

MRS. LANFEAR

Yes.

DR. LANFEAR

There's not very much doing so I thought I'd run down for a couple of days.

MRS. LANFEAR

He's so much better.

DR. LANFEAR

I know. I've seen the chart.

MRS. LANFEAR

He is still very nervous and irritable. But yesterday he was quite rational for a long time. Talked reasonably. All his old ambitions came back then. He talked

enthusiastically about what he intends doing. He's going to join you in your work.

DR. LANFEAR

[*Smiling.*] Study medicine?

MRS. LANFEAR

[*Smiling too.*] No. Your work against drugs.

DR. LANFEAR

Oh.

MRS. LANFEAR

He wants to lecture on his experiences: go before the various legislatures and persuade them to do something for the sufferers. Then he wants to have a hospital endowed for unfortunate drug-takers, with you in charge.

DR. LANFEAR

He's going to be quite busy.

MRS. LANFEAR

I love to hear him talk like that. He seems more like he was *then* and I can't believe he was ever like — like — *that*. When he exhausts himself talking and imagining and planning, the re-action comes and his depression is terrible. Has no hope — flash in the pan — can't be cured. When he gets abusive and unmanageable I leave him and send in Dr. Cobb. He really needs *you* when he's like that.

DR. LANFEAR

[*Cheerfully.*] Don't worry. They're stages in the recovery. I've seen them all. Going to revolutionise the world one minute, they're so strong: ready to die the next they're so weak. He gets plenty of air?

MRS. LANFEAR

Cobb takes him out twice a day. *He's* been splendid. Never relaxed since you've been away day or night.

DR. LANFEAR

Young Cobb's all right. Well, to-day the crisis ought to come. The last of the poison should disappear. Then we'll have very little to worry about. Fortunately he had nothing organically wrong. He'd taken so much of the stuff that it tied up all his organs and kept them from disease. [*Smiles.*] That was through not being a piker. Ten grains a day and he might have snuffed out long ago. *Forty* grains saved him. But he had a narrow squeak here. [*Touches his head.*]

MRS. LANFEAR

[*Fearfully.*] Insanity?

DR. LANFEAR

[*Nods.*] I thought he had a "wet-brain" at first. [*Smiles.*] He's even preserved *that*. After to-day it will be entirely in his own hands whether the cure will be permanent or not.

MRS. LANFEAR

[*Anxiously.*] What do you think?

DR. LANFEAR

It ought to be. We'll start him talking law presently. Get his mind doing what it used to. Then I'll take him to a big trial and see what *that* does when he hears younger men doing what he excelled at. If I can get his brain working as it did before he inflamed it with drugs then, in my opinion, he'll never go back to them. In a few days you can put any drug within his reach and he won't touch it. I am not sure that you couldn't do that *now*. The sight of it would nauseate him. When I am sure he is in no more danger I intend to make him go down into the places he frequented and meet the people he used to associate with. If there is any lingering desire left the sight of *them* will destroy it. No clean man longs for dirt. It offends him. When *he* is clean he'll run from filth.

MRS. LANFEAR

What suffering he's gone through.

DR. LANFEAR

Of course. There's no physical pain that approaches deprival of drugs from a confirmed addict. His body is a prison of pain. In a few days he will hardly believe he's ever gone through it. We forget pain just as quickly as we forget pleasure. And then, remember,

he was in a constant condition of misery when he was taking drugs. They all are, and they have nothing to look forward to except more drugs. Now he looks forward to being cured.

MRS. LANFEAR

You have worked a miracle.

DR. LANFEAR

[*Laughs.*] I mustn't boast. After all it was a *family* affair. [*Walks away to windows and looks out.*]

MRS. LANFEAR

Now *that's* over I have something very pleasant to tell you. Kate is here.

DR. LANFEAR

[*Turning quickly.*] Here? Where? Out there? [*Pointing to garden.*]

MRS. LANFEAR

They've taken a house on the bluff. I saw her this morning and told her the train you were coming in by. She said she would be over this afternoon.

DR. LANFEAR

This *afternoon?* Why didn't she meet the train? Nice thing. Keep me waiting like this. Have you seen the old man?

MRS. LANFEAR

No. He can't have any objection to you now, can he?

DR. LANFEAR

We don't care whether he has or not. The day of parents controlling the action of grown-up children is past. What right have they to interfere? They've lived their lives, haven't they? Very well, let the children live theirs. They've got to some day.

MRS. LANFEAR

But you wouldn't hurt *me?*

DR. LANFEAR

Of course not. But then you're not a bit like a mother. You're too sensible to make a fuss; you're a friend. But old man Burrows! [*Suddenly.*] I don't believe Kate is his child at all.

MRS. LANFEAR

What?

DR. LANFEAR

She's her *mother's* child — and her mother likes me and approves of the marriage. That's all that matters to either of us. I'll marry Kate as soon as she'll marry me.

MRS. LANFEAR

Why not wait a little? Don't force things. When Mr. Burrows sees the change in your father he may not oppose you any more. There'll be no reason to.

DR. LANFEAR

If he does, all well and good. If he doesn't, we'll marry just the same and invite him to the wedding. [*Laughs.*] That would do him good. [*Restlessly.*] Why doesn't she come? She can't be very anxious to see me. I've been here at least ten minutes. How far away do they live?

MRS. LANFEAR

Not far, a few minutes.

DR. LANFEAR

Will you do something for me? Go round and tell Kate I'm here — waiting — and very angry she didn't meet the train. [*Taking her to windows.*]

MRS. LANFEAR

But suppose I meet Mr. Burrows?

DR. LANFEAR

Bring him along, too — *and* her mother. Bring the whole family. Since we're going to be neighbours we may as well be neighbourly. Come along.

[*Takes her down and they walk out through windows.*]

Whatever you do, bring Kate. Show me where the house is?

[*Disappears to R. in garden.*]

[ENTER NURSE *L., quickly.*]

NURSE

I say, doctor — Oh! [*Looks around the room.*] Where *are* you?

[*Satisfies herself he is not in the room, goes out L. saying.*]

He was here a minute ago. I was talking to him. Shall I run round and find him?

THE PATIENT

[*Outside the door irritably.*] No. Let him find me.

[*He comes into the room. The change in the man is marvellous. He is erect of figure and clear of eye. The commonness has gone from his speech. It has now something of the authority and dignity of the once-great lawyer. He is dressed in a well-cut lounge suit. Except for the deathly pallor of his face and the intense nervous irritability of his manner he looks to all intents and purposes cured. He has entirely recovered the use of his poisoned arm and carries it freely without a sling. He sits on the deep lounge and picks up a magazine from the table near by.*]

NURSE

[*Bustling in after him and shutting the door noisily.*] I can find him all right. Shall I search the garden?

THE PATIENT

No, and kindly go away.

NURSE

My! what a temper we're in. I'd hate to have a disposition like you. Here — wait a minute. [*Suddenly remembers something and hurries out L., leaving the door open.*]

THE PATIENT

[*Flings the magazine away, rises and lounges over to the windows.*]

NURSE

[*Hurrying in with two pills and a glass of water; she closes the door.*] Here we are. Two nice ones this time. [*Joining him at the windows.*]

THE PATIENT

[*Turns abruptly from the windows and goes down to ottoman and sits.*] I don't want them.

NURSE

[*Following him.*] Don't be naughty now.

THE PATIENT

[*Angrily.*] Take them away. [*His fingers clasping nervously.*]

NURSE

[*Coaxing.*] You're not going to get nasty over your *last* dose, are you?

THE PATIENT

[*Turns quickly and looks at her, brightening up.*] The *last?*

NURSE

Sure. The doctor's marked your chart, "Two pills. No more."

THE PATIENT

[*Breathlessly.*] Will I be cured after those? [*Points to the pills.*]

NURSE

I suppose so. We all *hope* so.

THE PATIENT

No more waking me up every hour of the night?

NURSE

Every half-hour *last* night. And well I know it. No more of that. If the doctor says "no more," he means "no more," judging by the little I saw of him. He knows his own mind or I'm no judge. Not a smile in him. My, he's the serious one. Here! [*Holds up the pills.*] Down they go!

[The Patient *swallows the pills and drinks some water.* The Nurse *takes the glass from him, puts it on the table and sits comfortably on the lounge as though preparing for quite a long stay.*]

NURSE

What would you like me to do? Talk to you or read to you?

THE PATIENT

I'd like you to go out of the room.

NURSE

Is that so? Who's going to watch you then?

THE PATIENT

I don't want to be watched.

NURSE

I've got my orders. You'll have to put up with me till Dr. Cobb comes in. Sorry.

THE PATIENT

Then please keep quiet. [*Takes a book from table and looks at the illustrations.*]

NURSE

[*Polishing her nails on her sleeve and critically examining the cuticle.*] Aren't we *peevish!* I never knew shooting a little powder into people made them like you. Many's the time I've done it, too.

THE PATIENT

[*Looks up: thinks; turns round slowly and looks at her.*] *You've* done it?

NURSE

[*Holding her hand away and looking at the polish on her nails.*] My, yes. Often.

THE PATIENT

[*Drops the book on the floor, moves along the ottoman and faces her: his eyes have brightened with a new interest.*] How much could ye take? Eh? How many grains at once?

NURSE

[*Indignantly.*] *Me* take? *I* never took it. But I've shot it into other people over and over again. They all seemed to like it. Kept them quiet. None of them ever took on the way you do sometimes. [*Laughs.*] You must have had a skinful in your time.

THE PATIENT

[*Nods excitedly.*] I have. I could take more than any one. I have taken forty grains in a day! Think of it! *Forty!* And hypodermically, too!

NURSE

My! what a waste. Great strong man like you. Ought to have been ashamed of yourself.

THE PATIENT

Haven't you ever tried it? [*Insinuatingly.*]

NURSE

No — and I'm not going to.

THE PATIENT

[*Thinks: twitches nervously.*] Have you got a hypodermic-syringe of your own?

NURSE

Of course I have. Always carry one — on duty.

THE PATIENT

[*Gets right to the edge of the ottoman: whispers.*] Got any morphine?

NURSE

A little. [*Suspiciously.*] Why?

THE PATIENT

Let me look at it.

NURSE

What for?

THE PATIENT

[*Now quite excited; his eyes dance; his fingers lock and unlock. He keeps control of his voice, which is reassuring, smooth and crafty.*] I'd like to see it. It means nothing to me now. Nothing. I'm cured. You've given me my last dose, haven't you? Let me look at it.

NURSE

[*Rising: rather frightened but quite determined.*] No, I won't.

THE PATIENT

[*Rising and standing over her.*] Just the syringe. Let me see it. Just a look. Please. It seems years

since I've seen one. Come. There's no harm in *looking,* is there?

NURSE

[*Taking out the hypodermic-syringe unwillingly.*] I don't like this. There it is.

[THE PATIENT *stretches out his hands eagerly for it.*]

NURSE

You're not to touch it. [*Holding it away.*]

THE PATIENT

Of course not. Why should I?

[*The* NURSE *begins to put it back.*]

THE PATIENT

[*Quickly.*] Don't put it away. Don't. Keep it in your hand.

NURSE

Now look here —

THE PATIENT

I want to prove to myself how strong my will is! That I'm really cured. [*Reaches for it.*]

NURSE

[*Putting her hand behind her back.*] Keep your hands off.

THE PATIENT

All right. [*Pause.*] Show me the morphine.

NURSE

The idea! I'll not do anything of the kind. What good would it do you?

THE PATIENT

Show me some. It can't hurt me. I hate it now. I wouldn't touch it if you were to put it down there before me.

NURSE

Well, I'm not going to. I wouldn't trust you very far. What are your eyes dancing for? And look at your fingers. You're getting all worked up. I'm off. [*Starts for door L.*]

THE PATIENT

[*Stops her.*] Show me some morphine. Just a look.

NURSE

Don't be silly. [*Trying to pass him.*]

THE PATIENT

[*Stopping her.*] I only want to *look* at it. That's all. Please.

NURSE

I wish I hadn't spoken about it. [*Takes out box and opens it.*] There. [*Watches the man looking at the powder as if it were some mysterious magic thing; there is hunger and thirst and desire in his eyes.*] You're a funny one, you are.

THE PATIENT

[*Trembling with excitement, points to the syringe.*] To think of the misery that little instrument can cause. [*Then with complete change of tone.*] And imagine the happiness — the ecstasy, the — the — [*Suddenly.*] Put some in this — [*Lifts up the glass in which there is still some water.*]

NURSE

I will not.

THE PATIENT

Do what I tell you.

NURSE

I've had enough of this. [*Again tries to pass him.*]

THE PATIENT

[*Steps right in front of her; there is an ugly look in his eyes, a tone of command in his voice.*] Put some in here, my dear. Shove it in. A quarter-grain. That's all. Go on. I want to see it melt in the water. Become part of it. [*He is moist and clammy with nervous intensity.*] I want to satisfy myself I really am cured. I want to watch the stuff in the water! See it dissolve. Put it in. Do as I tell you.

NURSE

[*Thoroughly alarmed.*] You'll get me into trouble if the doctor comes in.

THE PATIENT

Put it in.

[*The* NURSE *shakes some of the powder into the glass and stops.* THE PATIENT *motions her to put in more. In her nervousness she empties almost the entire boxful into the water.*]

NURSE

[*Angry.*] Now see what you've done. Wasted almost the lot.

THE PATIENT

[*Watching it in the water fiendishly.*] Stir it with the syringe.

NURSE

You're crazy.

THE PATIENT

[*Commandingly.*] Stir it. [*She stirs it with the syringe.*] Now fill the syringe.

NURSE

No, I won't.

THE PATIENT

You will.

NURSE

I won't. Let me go or I'll call out.

THE PATIENT

[*Changing his tone to a coaxing one.*] Then my test is complete — when I see you fill it, then hold it in my hand and *know* it means nothing. Fill it.

NURSE

I wish some one would come. I hate this.

THE PATIENT

Fill it.

NURSE

[*Puts the syringe into the glass and fills it, watching him fearfully and suspiciously.*]

THE PATIENT

Give it me.

NURSE

That I won't do. You mustn't touch it.

THE PATIENT

[*Threateningly.*] Give it me.

NURSE

You're the crafty one, aren't you? Well, you're not going to get it from me. Dr. Cobb! Dr. Cobb!

THE PATIENT

[*Grips her by the wrist, snatches the syringe, turning up the sleeve of his right arm, all the time standing between the* NURSE *and the door.*]

NURSE

[*Calling.*] Stop it! Dr. Cobb! Dr. Lanfear! Help! Stop it, will you!

[*Just as* THE PATIENT *is about to make the incision in his arm and give himself an injection,* DR. LANFEAR *comes in through the windows.*]

NURSE

[*Calling out to* DR. LANFEAR.] Take it away from him. Quick! Take it away.

[DR. LANFEAR *hurries down to* THE PATIENT *and takes the syringe from him.*]

[THE PATIENT *chatters and drivels to himself in an access of rage. His whole appearance is transformed. He is once again the drug-fiend craving for the poison.*]

DR. LANFEAR

[*To* THE PATIENT *holding out the syringe.*] Where did you get this?

NURSE

[*Pressing her wrist that was twisted by* THE PATIENT *in the struggle, to her face: half-crying, half-laughing, wholly hysterical.*] From — from me.

DR. LANFEAR

[*Turning to her.*] From you?

NURSE

Yes. Grabbed it out of my hand. Twisted my wrist until I had to let it go. Look. [*Shows him her wrist.*]

DR. LANFEAR

[*Empties the syringe into the glass.*] What's in it?

NURSE

Morphine.

DR. LANFEAR

[*Looks at her in amazement.*] What?

NURSE

He said he wanted to see how strong he was. Got me to show him the syringe first! Then to put some morphine in the glass — got me so nervous I spilt the boxful into it. See? Then he said: "Fill it," he said, and when I filled it he snatched it out of my hand. Ask him! Crazy — that's what he is. Dippy. Nice wrist I've got. Look at it.

DR. LANFEAR

[*Angrily.*] Why did you take out the syringe or the morphine? You know the kind of case this is.

NURSE

We were talking about them and he asked to see them.

DR. LANFEAR

You're a danger in a house, young woman. You've no more right to have a hypodermic-syringe than he has with a loaded revolver.

NURSE

The idea! Why not, I'd like to know? I've always had it. Never had any trouble before. Crazy fool, that's what he is. He wants a man round to handle

him! Give him a good beating; that's what he wants. The strong brute. Look at my wrist. [*Shows it again.*]

DR. LANFEAR

You pack up and go.

THE PATIENT

It wasn't her fault. I made her do it.

NURSE

And he did, too. But don't make any mistake. I'm going. I wouldn't stay here with *him* for anything you'd offer me. He ought to be tied up; that's what he ought to be.

DR. LANFEAR

You've said quite enough. The time will come when no nurse will be allowed to carry one of those things nor to have any drug upon her. It is a menace to any house she may be brought into.

NURSE

The sooner the better, *I* say, if *that's* the way some people behave. [*Crosses to door L., changes her tone and appeals to* DR. LANFEAR.] Are you going to get me into trouble over this?

DR. LANFEAR

I shall certainly advise against you being put on any drug-case again. It's one more instance of the danger

of allowing any one but a doctor to use a hypodermic-syringe on a patient. *You're* not so much to blame as the system. But you'd better be careful how you use one again.

NURSE

Well, what about *him!* Who's going to blame *him,* I'd like to know?

DR. LANFEAR

That will do.

NURSE

I wish you joy of that. [*Points to* THE PATIENT.] Glad to see the last of him, I can tell you. No more "dopes" for me. Nice wrist he's given me.

[*Exit L.*]

DR. LANFEAR

[*Takes the glass containing the drug to the windows and empties it into the garden, walks back and puts the glass back on the table, speaks very quietly to* THE PATIENT.] I'm sorry you did that.

THE PATIENT

[*Angrily.*] Are *ye?* I'm damn sorry you came in when you did.

DR. LANFEAR

It's such a pity when you're so near the end.

THE PATIENT

Near what end?

DR. LANFEAR

The end of your cure.

THE PATIENT

[*In a frenzy.*] I don't want to be cured. To hell with your cure. If I'd known what I had to go through I'd never have begun it. I'd have walked out of your damned office. I wish I had, too.

DR. LANFEAR

[*Gently.*] Don't say that.

THE PATIENT

I *do* say it. I've been on the rack. It's seemed like a hundred years. Every day has been a year. Every hour full of horrible minutes. Oh! what I've gone through. Why didn't you turn me out instead of starting your blasted cure on me? At least I had some happy times before I met you. I have had nothing but torture since.

DR. LANFEAR

[*Goes to him and tries to soothe him.*] You had nothing but torture when you were taking drugs, had you? It's nearly over.

THE PATIENT

Nearly over? [*Laughs a brutal derisive laugh.*] Nearly over! My body is crying out for it now. *That's* how good your cure is.

DR. LANFEAR

Only because you gave way to that momentary temptation. To-morrow it will mean nothing to you. You remembered all the old symptoms directly you saw the syringe. You felt the craving for an injection.

THE PATIENT

[*Breaking in.*] And I feel it *now*. And I always *will* feel it. You and your cure! [*Contemptuously.*] You'll never cure me.

DR. LANFEAR

You're much nearer it than you think.

THE PATIENT

[*Fiercely.*] *Am* I? With every bone in my body aching for it? With my head splitting through the want of it? With my muscles tense at the thought of it? It's throbbing here. [*Touches his forehead.*] With every beat of my pulse: "mor-phine! mor-phine! mor-phine!" [*Repeats it in syllables as though it rose and fell with his heart-beat.*]

DR. LANFEAR

[*Puts his arms around the man's shoulders.*] Just a little more patience, a little more courage. You've been wonderfully plucky. You don't want to undo all our good work.

THE PATIENT

[*Sneezes convulsively, his teeth chattering.*] No, I don't *want* to. But I can't help it. [*Shivers and moans and whines.*] I'd never have thought of it if I hadn't seen it. Never *meant* to think of it. But now I *have*, I feel I must have it. Just a little, only very little — just to stop the craving. Then never any more. Never — word of honour.

[DR. LANFEAR *shakes his head.*]

Don't stand there shaking your head. [*Murderously.*] I could kill ye when ye look at me like that. There's just ice in yer veins. Give it me! D'ye hear? Give it me! [*Rises threateningly.*]

DR. LANFEAR

[*Trying to quiet him.*] Sssh! Don't! Don't!

THE PATIENT

Ye won't?

DR. LANFEAR

Just one last struggle.

THE PATIENT

I brought ye into the world. I'll send ye out of it — [*Takes* DR. LANFEAR *by the throat; they struggle for a few seconds,* THE PATIENT *breathing heavily and giving short, sharp guttural ejaculations:* DR. LANFEAR *holding him by the wrists: the two men are quite tense, scarcely moving: suddenly* THE PATIENT *relaxes his*

hold, goes quite limp, gasps for breath, totters, then leans on DR. LANFEAR, *who helps him into a chair.*]

Sorry I was — such — a brute. Sorry — my boy. [*Gasping.*] I'm — done. Finished. All over. Ye did yer best. No use. Couldn't — save — me. [*Tears his vest open and presses his heart.*] Beats — like — a hammer! [*Trying to get his breath.*] I'd — like — to — see — your — mother. Just — a — word.

DR. LANFEAR

She'll be here in a few minutes.

THE PATIENT

[*Looking at him with glazed eyes.*] I'd like — to have a word — with — her — before — I — Decent — of ye —to — try — and save me. I wasn't worth it — It was no use. Too strong a hold. [*Pause.*] Years — of — starvation — too. [*Pause.*] The pain — was — too much for me. [*Pause.*] Lying — awake — at — night — gnawing and tearing at me. [*Takes several deep breaths.*] I feel sick. [*Pause.*] Sick as a dog. [*Almost fainting.*] Where's — your — mother?

[DR. LANFEAR *tries to raise him.*]

Let — me — be. Let me — stay — here. I feel so sick. [*Sneezes. Pause.*] What a muck of everything. [*Pause.*] Felt all right this morning. [*Pause.*] Thought I'd beat it. [*Pause; pressing his heart.*] The syringe did it. [*Gasps.*] And the sight of the powder. [*Pause.*] If I'd got through this — it would happen

again. [*Pause.*] Couldn't — have — done — without "dope." [*Pause.*] "Dope" to work. [*Pause.*] "Dope" to sleep. [*Pause.*] "Dope" when you're happy. [*Pause.*] "Dope" when you're wretched. [*Pause.*] All "dope." Rotten "dope." [*Pause.*] Once get it into you — never get free. [*Pause.*] Takes ye in its arms — and — winds them round ye — like whip-cord. [*Pause.*] All round me. [*Pause.*] Cutting — into — me. [*His voice faints away. He looks desperately ill: his breath comes very slowly; a spasm of pain convulses his features; he presses both hands on his stomach.*]

[*Enter* Dr. Cobb *L.*]

DR. COBB

Hello!

[Dr. Lanfear *motions him to go to the other side of* The Patient; *they raise him, he leans heavily on them.*]

What happened? He was splendid just now.

DR. LANFEAR

[*Meaningly.*] The last attack.

DR. COBB

[*Excitedly.*] Really?

DR. LANFEAR

[*Positively.*] The last. Quickly. Get him to his room.

DR. COBB

[*To* THE PATIENT.] Steady. Hold on to yourself — there's a good chap, you'll be all right in a minute. [*Takes out his handkerchief and wipes the perspiration from* THE PATIENT'S *face.*]

Now then. Come along.

[*The two men move* THE PATIENT *slowly toward the door.*]

THE PATIENT

[*To* DR. LANFEAR.] I want — to see — your mother.

DR. LANFEAR

I'll bring her to you.

THE PATIENT

[*Feebly as he is led out.*] I'm done. No strength in me. What a fool. [*Pause.*] I knew ye couldn't do it. Did your best. No good. Ye couldn't save me.

[*The three men go out L.* THE PATIENT'S *voice can be heard for some seconds after they disappear.*]

[MRS. LANFEAR *appears at windows, looks in, sees the room is empty, turns back and beckons.* KATE BURROWS *joins her and they come into the room.*]

MRS. LANFEAR

I'll send for him. [*Rings.*] He was so disappointed you weren't here.

KATE

Well, you saw all those women.

MRS. LANFEAR

[*Laughs.*] Yes.

KATE

I simply couldn't get away. There was so much to talk about.

MRS. LANFEAR

You must make your own excuses. He expected you at the depôt.

[*Enter* SERVANT *L.*]

MRS. LANFEAR

Tell the doctor.

[*Exit* SERVANT *L.*]

KATE

How is —? [*Breaks off.*]

MRS. LANFEAR

My husband?

KATE

Yes.

MRS. LANFEAR

My son thinks it is nearly over.

KATE

How wonderful.

MRS. LANFEAR

My son *is* wonderful.

KATE

[*Her eyes dancing with enthusiasm.*] I know he is. You won't mind us running away?

MRS. LANFEAR

Mind? Why, I'll pack for him! Go with you both to the wedding and see you off on your honeymoon. Can I do more?

KATE

[*Impulsively embraces* MRS. LANFEAR.] My father knows by now.

MRS. LANFEAR

[*Anxiously.*] Does he?

KATE

[*Nods.*] My mother was just going in to tell him as I came away.

MRS. LANFEAR

What do you think he'll do?

KATE

Bellow at the top of his voice — as he always does, and then give in ungraciously as he always *has* to — with me.

MRS. LANFEAR

I wish he wasn't so bitter against us.

KATE

That doesn't cut any ice with me. You don't suppose I am going to let a *man* interfere in my life, just because he happens to be my father, do you?

[MRS. LANFEAR *smiles and shakes her head.*]

That sort of thing belongs to another generation. Men will be asking our consent before we're much older. We've discussed all that thoroughly.

MRS. LANFEAR

We?

KATE

Do you know I am the secretary of the "*Forward-Woman*" Propaganda?

MRS. LANFEAR

No. *Are* you?

KATE

I am. I made my first speech last Friday. I wish my father had been there. Man was just a harmless unnecessary burden before we'd finished.

MRS. LANFEAR

[*Laughing.*] Really?

KATE

You may laugh, but I tell you it's wonderful to stand up before a lot of people and abuse a sex that has been

tyrant for years — abuse it out loud with everybody cheering. It's great. I love to hear myself talk.

MRS. LANFEAR

[*Laughing.*] You don't mean a word you're saying.

KATE

I *did* — last Friday — on the platform. Of course, when I went all over it afterwards, *alone,* it did seem a bit flat. But at the time everything seemed real. I saw myself marching at the head of thousands of the down-trodden, chanting a pæan of victory.

[DR. LANFEAR *walks in L. quietly, neither of the women see him.*]

KATE

[*Quoting.*]

"She bore us in her dreaming womb
And laughed into the face of death;
She laughed in her strange agony
To give her little baby breath.
She who then went thro' flaming hell
To make us put into our clay
All that there is of heaven, shall she —
Mother and sister, wife and fay,—
Have no part in the world she made —
Serf of the rainbow, Vassal flower —
Save knitting in the afternoon
And rocking cradles, hour by hour?"

Isn't that wonderful?

DR. LANFEAR

[*Comes forward and greets* KATE.] Don't let me interrupt. Go on. What is it?

KATE

[*Shrinking into herself: dropping the "platform-manner."*] It is called "A Ballad of Woman," by Richard Le Gallienne. [*Blushing.*] Were you—? When I—? Did you hear it?

DR. LANFEAR

Some of it. Flaming hell and clay: Wife and fay and the World she made. You did it extremely well, too. Is there any more?

KATE

[*Confused.*] Not just now.

MRS. LANFEAR

[*Anxiously to* DR. LANFEAR.] Have you seen him?

DR. LANFEAR

Yes. He had a wretched attack just now. The stupid nurse showed him a syringe — and — [*Breaks off.*]

MRS. LANFEAR

Oh!

DR. LANFEAR

He wants to see you.

MRS. LANFEAR

Where is he?

DR. LANFEAR

In his room. Don't go just yet. Cobb will tell us. He's passing through the last stage.

MRS. LANFEAR

But if he wants me.

DR. LANFEAR

He has all the symptoms now that I like to see in a patient the length of time he's been under treatment. [*Smiles.*] I think the poison is at its last gasp. I'll take you up to him the moment Cobb comes in. And now [*Going to* KATE *and taking both of her hands.*] you look splendid.

KATE

Do I?

DR. LANFEAR

Splendid.

KATE

[*Laughs girlishly, turns to* MRS. LANFEAR.] Of course, what I said doesn't apply to *him.*

MRS. LANFEAR

[*Smiling.*] Doesn't it?

KATE

Oh, no. He is the glorious exception. Just as most Christians have a pet Jew, so many suffragettes have a pet *man,*— a beyond-man. *He's* mine.

MRS. LANFEAR

Will you carry on the propaganda after marriage?

KATE

Of course. [*To* Dr. Lanfear.] You won't mind?

DR. LANFEAR

Mind? I love it. I'll help you with your speeches.

KATE

[*Withdrawing her hands and speaking quite coldly.*] You needn't, thank you; I can do quite well enough — *alone*. Last Friday night a man told me after the meeting I'd won him completely.

DR. LANFEAR

Did he?

KATE

He said I sent the blood right up to his head.

DR. LANFEAR

Fancy that.

KATE

He also said he was positive I had a great future.

DR. LANFEAR

I agree with him. You've won *me* completely: you send the blood to *my* head often — and I'm positive of your future,— *with me.* [*Laughs.*]

KATE

[*Severely.*] Don't scoff.

DR. LANFEAR

I'm not scoffing. What a silly word.

KATE

Remember it's for your sake I'm trying to bring light and freedom and progress to woman.

DR. LANFEAR

Is it? Why?

KATE

You roused me into doing it.

DR. LANFEAR

When?

KATE

The night you proposed. You told me I ought to do something. Well, I've begun. You urged me to join the procession of women. I've joined it.

DR. LANFEAR

Did *I* do that?

KATE

Partly. You set me thinking. I'm not going to be any longer the idle do-nothing daughter of a rich man. I feel the mantle of the Liberator has fallen on me. I've had the "call," and I'm going to follow it.

DR. LANFEAR

Fine.

KATE

I used to sometimes hate being a woman when I saw men out in the struggle doing everything and the women doing nothing. We're going to alter all that.

DR. LANFEAR

Is that so?

KATE

You wait and see if we don't. When universal freedom comes woman will *lead,* not drag along behind.

DR. LANFEAR

Hasn't she led all the time?

KATE

Indeed she hasn't. That's why the world is all wrong. She's been a slave.

DR. LANFEAR

Fancy that. [*To* MRS. LANFEAR.] Have you been?

MRS. LANFEAR

No.

KATE

What is the average home but slavery to a woman?

DR. LANFEAR

Don't you think many of the Propagandists will find the slavery of home a pleasant release from the tyranny of their "Propaganda"?

KATE

I covered all that last Friday.

DR. LANFEAR

Oh, well, of course —

KATE

Home is all-sufficing for those who've not felt the "call." But we who *have* felt it know there's something bigger, wider, fuller, more comprehensive and altogether greater for woman than being shut away within four walls, knitting and rocking cradles. We want to make laws, control destinies: make this old world revolve on new axes.

DR. LANFEAR

[*To* MRS. LANFEAR.] I did a nice thing when I told her to join the procession, didn't I? [*To* KATE.] You don't believe woman has been doing all that for centuries.

KATE

No, I don't. Nor do you. She's only just begun to feel her power.

DR. LANFEAR

There is hardly a law in force that woman hasn't brought some influence to bear on it. That she controls destinies no one will deny who knows anything of woman's influence. And with regard to the new axes on which the world is to turn, woman continually creates them when she brings children into the world. Woman is the mother of her people and through the child woman's voice is heard in everything great that is done.

MRS. LANFEAR

[*To* KATE.] He's right, dear.

KATE

[*Loftily.*] I treated all that old-fashioned stuff thoroughly last Friday.

DR. LANFEAR

[*Smiling.*] It must have been a wonderful speech — last Friday.

KATE

Every one who heard it said it was. Oh! I do wish my father had been there. [*To* DR. LANFEAR.] *And* you. You'd have been amazed.

DR. LANFEAR

I'm sure I would. To get down to commonplace things, what does your father think of our marriage now?

KATE

I scorn to ask him. I've been under the yoke too long. The iron-heel of the parent is the first thing we're going to remove.

[*Enter* SERVANT *L., crosses over to* MRS. LANFEAR.]

SERVANT

Mr. and Mrs. Burrows.

[MRS. LANFEAR *nods.*]

[*Exit* SERVANT *L.*]

DR. LANFEAR

Mr. and Mrs.! [*To* KATE.] Eh?

[KATE *nods timidly.*]

Now's your chance. You can not only remove the iron-heel, but give him some of last Friday's speech; give him it all!

KATE

He'd only shout. He always bellows when he doesn't understand.

DR. LANFEAR

We'll back you up.

KATE

I wouldn't waste words on him. How he ever came to be my father is beyond me.

[SERVANT *shows in* MR. AND MRS. BURROWS, *L., and exit L.*]

BURROWS

[*Coming in abruptly, nods to* MRS. LANFEAR, *glares angrily at* DR. LANFEAR, *then goes straight across to* KATE.] *You're* here, are ye?

KATE

Looks like it, doesn't it?

BURROWS

You're a nice piece of goods, you are, an' no mistake.

KATE

[*Scornfully.*] Piece of goods.

BURROWS

So ye think to double-cross me, do ye?

KATE

Double-cross you?

BURROWS

Live in me home, spend me money, an' work against me. Pretty cool, ain't ye?

KATE

You've no idea how your words jar.

BURROWS

Jar, do they? Well, you've jarred me pretty often, don't you make any mistake. Who filled your head with all this tom-fool nonsense?

[*Nodding toward* DR. LANFEAR.]

Did he? [*Opens out newspaper.*] This is fine stuff for my daughter to speak in front of a lot of silly people. A parcel of short-haired women who ought to be damn well spanked, and bloodless men who'd be better off breaking stones in the streets.

KATE

[*Indignantly.*] Oh! [*To* Dr. Lanfear.] Let us go.

[*Goes toward windows.*]

BURROWS

[*Turns to* Dr. Lanfear.] Ye know what I think of you? If ye don't, ye ought to. What do ye mean by fillin' my daughter's head with this stuff? [*Tapping newspaper.*]

DR. LANFEAR

Have I?

BURROWS

Yes, you have, have ye!

DR. LANFEAR

[*Laughs.*] Read it out. I haven't heard it yet.

BURROWS

Me read it out? [*Crumples up the paper and throws it in the fireplace.*] That's the best place for that rubbish. Now for the other thing I've come here about. My wife tells me you're going to marry whether I like it or not.

KATE

[*Coming down.*] We are.

BURROWS

Oh, ye are! What do you know about him? [*Nodding at* DR. LANFEAR.] Or I? Or any one else for that matter?

DR. LANFEAR

It's easy enough to find out.

BURROWS

Where's that father of yours?

DR. LANFEAR

[*Nodding toward door L.*] In there.

BURROWS

What was he, I'd like to know, before he married your mother?

DR. LANFEAR

One of the foremost lawyers in America.

BURROWS

[*Taken aback for a moment.*] Oh! Indeed?

DR. LANFEAR

Gilbert Lanfear's name was well-known and respected from New York to San Francisco.

BURROWS

Respected, was it? Then what was he doin' workin' for me as a day-labourer?

DR. LANFEAR

That was his misfortune.

BURROWS

And mine, too — the drunken —

DR. LANFEAR

[*Goes right over to him.*] Stop that. The condition you saw my father in was not caused by drunkenness, but through the criminal negligence of one of my profession.

BURROWS

Your profession?

DR. LANFEAR

Yes. He was not a drunkard. He was a victim of drugs.

BURROWS

I wondered why ye took so much interest in them. Have ye cured him?

DR. LANFEAR

We'll see presently.

BURROWS

Well, I'll tell ye one thing — ye can take yer drug-taking father somewhere else. I don't want him in my house.

DR. LANFEAR

I don't want him in your house.

BURROWS

And you let my girl alone. She can make a good match — with my money.

KATE

I've made one without it.

BURROWS

[*To* KATE.] Don't forget what I did with yer brother. Kicked him out. I'd do the same with you.

KATE

All right. Do it now. Consider you *have* kicked me out. [*To* MRS. LANFEAR.] Will you let me stay here until we're married?

[MRS. BURROWS *goes to* KATE.]

[MRS. LANFEAR *tries to speak.*]

DR. LANFEAR

[*To* MRS. LANFEAR.] Wait a minute. [*To* BURROWS.] What is your real objection to me? That I haven't enough money? I'll make it. Or is it because of my father?

BURROWS

Yes, it is, if ye want to know. I don't mind *you* so much. I could make something of ye if ye did what I

told ye. But I've not forgotten what your father said to me. I'm not going to have an insulting drug-taking loafer around me.

KATE

[*To* Dr. Lanfear.] Tell him to go. [*Indignantly.*]

DR. LANFEAR

[*Tries to quiet her.*] Sssh!

[Mrs. Lanfear *joins them with the object of smoothing out the quarrel.*]

BURROWS

[*To* Dr. Lanfear.] She's right. You don't want me here, and I don't want you in my home. [*To* Mrs. Burrows.] Come along.

MRS. BURROWS

[*With an effort to her husband.*] You have no right to object to Dr. Lanfear's father.

BURROWS

[*Amazed.*] Haven't I?

MRS. BURROWS

No. Your daughter is the child of a drug-taker.

BURROWS

What? Do you mean to say that I —?

MRS. BURROWS

I was a drug-taker once.

BURROWS

[*Pause: in astonishment.*] *You* were?

MRS. BURROWS

[*Nods.*] Do you remember after Kate was born I didn't leave my bed for nearly a year?

BURROWS

Remember it? I should think I do. Ye always had a bunch of doctors around ye. Bled me fine, they did.

MRS. BURROWS

Do you know what was the matter with me?

BURROWS

Nerves, the doctors said. Want of fresh air and exercise, I'd call it.

MRS. BURROWS

I was sick, almost to death, through taking morphine. [*General movement as the effect of her statement is clearly shown on all the others.*]

For a month before Kate was born, and for some little time afterwards, I was continually under its influence. *That* was why I was ill for a year. I was fighting the habit just as his father is now.

BURROWS

Well, that's a nice thing. Why didn't ye tell me?

MRS. BURROWS

There are many things I've never told you because I knew you could neither understand nor sympathise with them any more than you can understand or sympathise with Kate now — just at the critical period of her life. You're not an understanding man — about your dependents. *That's* why I didn't tell you. I am only telling you now because of something Dr. Lanfear said — that his father's downfall was due to a doctor. Mine was the fault — the criminal fault of a *nurse*.

DR. LANFEAR

[*Goes to her.*] A nurse?

MRS. BURROWS

Yes. I have often been on the point of telling you when I've heard you speaking against doctors and nurses being allowed to give drugs as they do.

BURROWS

[*Angry and disgusted.*] *You* a drug-taker. And I never knew it. [*Under his breath.*] Damn my soul.

MRS. BURROWS

[*To* Dr. Lanfear.] As it came near my time I was in dreadful pain. Day and night. The only time I could sleep was when the doctor gave me an opiate or an injection. I didn't know what he gave me, but I felt it must have been something dangerous, since he would

let no one else give it to me, and he would only inject when I could bear the pain no longer. Often it would wear off in the middle of the night and I'd suffer and moan until he came in the morning. He was very strict: very conscientious. He only gave it me twice a day and never increased the amount.

DR. LANFEAR

How do you know?

MRS. BURROWS

It came out afterwards.

DR. LANFEAR

If you didn't know what he was giving you, and he kept such a strict regard for the *amount,* how did you contract the habit?

MRS. BURROWS

One night a new nurse came. I woke bolt, staring awake in dreadful pain at about four in the morning. The nurse was asleep. My crying and moaning woke her. She gave me something to drink. In a little while I slept. Every time I woke afterwards in pain she did the same — she would give me what looked like a glass of plain water and in a little while the pain would fade away and I would sleep. How I thanked God that nurse had been sent to me. [*Pause.*] After Kate was born I wasn't expected to live. It was only my *desire* to live, for my baby's sake, that kept life in me, the doc-

tor said. In a little while I began to get stronger. The pain left me. But in its place came a terrible craving — I didn't know for what. My whole body seemed to be crying out for something. The doctor was puzzled. No treatment seemed to help me. [*To* BURROWS.] It was then he called in other doctors.

[BURROWS *grunts.*]

They were all as mystified as he was. I was, apparently, organically healthy, but my nerves drove me almost frantic. I had no actual physical pain — yet my whole system ached and my mind was filled with the most horrible thoughts. When I slept I was haunted by still more terrible dreams. [*Pause.*] I hated my baby. Hated it.

[KATE *takes her mother's hand.* MRS. BURROWS *pauses a moment, then turns to* BURROW.]

Do you recall that I wouldn't allow her to be brought near me?

BURROWS

[*Gruffly.*] I remember something. I was very busy at the time.

MRS. BURROWS

One morning they brought a new doctor — a nerve specialist. He was much younger than the others. I trusted and believed in him the moment I saw him. His manner was different. Instead of asking questions he seemed to make up his mind instantly what the real trouble was. I had had a fearful night. The bed was

soaked through with perspiration. I thought I was going to die. [*To* BURROWS.] I sent for you. You came — long afterwards — towards evening.

BURROWS

Very likely. You were always sending for me then. False alarms.

MRS. BURROWS

[*After a pause.*] The new doctor took an entirely different view from the others. It was not the prostration of maternity, in his opinion. He said *I had all the symptoms of morphine-poisoning.* My own doctor disagreed with him, saying I'd had none for over two months — since a few days after Kate's birth. The specialist asked him how much he had given me before. He told him half-a-grain twice a day. That did not account for my condition. He, too, was at a loss to understand it. He evidently suspected I had been taking it myself. He questioned me closely. I told him of the waking at night and the misery I suffered. Then of the coming of the new nurse and the quieting of the pain after she would give me something to drink. He asked to see the nurse, but she had left soon after my confinement. He turned to the other doctors and said he would make no diagnosis until the nurse was found. He would stake his professional reputation on the theory that I was suffering from the deprivation of morphine. Next day the nurse was brought to my bedside. Under the examination of the specialist she ad-

mitted that from the time she took charge of me *she had kept me in a condition of coma through morphine, continually increasing the amount until she had been giving me two grains dissolved in water.*

DR. LANFEAR

What did the specialist do?

MRS. BURROWS

He saved me. For nearly a year I was bed-ridden. He kept building up my constitution to fight the disease.

DR. LANFEAR

Did he give you any morphine?

MRS. BURROWS

No. After the craving had gone he sent me abroad. I travelled continually for another six months.

BURROWS

Thousands of dollars it cost. I'd like to wring that nurse's neck.

MRS. BURROWS

When I came home I was entirely free. Since then I've never had the slightest desire for it.

DR. LANFEAR

[*Smiles.*] We have gone a little ahead since those days. I will undertake to destroy all craving in the

most hardened addict within a few weeks. You must have suffered terribly.

MRS. BURROWS

[*Nods.*] And so must your father's sufferings have been terrible. [*To* BURROWS.] In telling you of mine I ask you to show a little charity toward him.

BURROWS

[*Looks at his wife for several moments: then quite gently.*] You should have told me at the time.

MRS. BURROWS

I was ashamed. I seemed to myself to be some unclean thing.

[DR. LANFEAR *looks at his mother significantly.*]

[*Pleading to* BURROWS.] Don't despise his father because some one put a poison into his blood. Pity him. His son will restore him just as the specialist cured me. If you hate him because of that curse, then you should hate me. I don't think you do that. Do you? [*She is now quite emotional.*]

BURROWS

[*Puts his hand on her shoulder.*] Ssh! Ssh! Ssh!

[MRS. BURROWS *cries.*]

Here, stop that. No need to cry. I mayn't have been very understandin' or sympathisin' with ye, but we've got along all right, haven't we? Ye should have told me about it. I might have looked at some things dif-

ferently. [*To* Dr. Lanfear.] Lots of us blunder all along in the dark with our women-folk. We worry if they tell us things and raise Cain if they don't tell us. Ye're a poor weak lot anyway —

KATE

[*Indignantly.*] Not the woman of *to-day!*

BURROWS

[*Laughing good-naturedly and patting his wife's hand.*] Well the woman of yesterday was. Eh, mother? [*Turns suddenly to* Dr. Lanfear.] Say! Can I see your father?

DR. LANFEAR

I'm afraid not. I'll find out.

[*Exit L.*]

BURROWS

[*Looking curiously at his wife.*] Morphine, eh? What do ye think o' that? *You're* the last in the world I'd have thought — I'll never have a nurse in my house again. Not me. I wonder one of 'em hasn't started. [*Turns on* Kate.] *you* on it.

KATE

Don't be absurd.

BURROWS

[*Suddenly.*] Do you know, I think that young man's goin' to make money. If he can do in a few weeks

what a *specialist* took a *year* over, what's goin' to stop him? If he *advertises* enough they'll simply roll up. If he'd listen to me he'd make a fortune. I like his looks.

[*The door L. opens and* DR. LANFEAR *brings in his father. Although deathly white the man is completely transformed. He has changed into an indoor suit, has complete control of his movements. All the weakness and terror has gone. He carries himself erect. His manner is polished and courteous. He is cured.*]

MRS. LANFEAR

[*Goes to her husband and looks at him in amazement; joy comes into her eye and into her voice as she turns to her son.*] Is he —?

DR. LANFEAR

[*Nods.*] Completely.

MRS. LANFEAR

[*With a cry of happiness.*] Oh! He will never —?

DR. LANFEAR

[*Decidedly.*] Never. [*To his father.*] Will you?

THE PATIENT

[*Smiling.*] Of course not. Why should I? You don't burn your hand in the same fire *twice,* do you? [*He is about to continue when he sees* BURROWS. *He turns to* DR. LANFEAR.] Do I know —?

DR. LANFEAR

[*Introducing.*] Mr. and Mrs. Burrows — Miss Burrows.

THE PATIENT

[*Bows to* Mrs. Burrows *and* Kate*: holds out his hand to* Burrows.] Charmed.

BURROWS

[*Looks at him in absolute astonishment: hesitates, then grips his hand.*] Remember me?

THE PATIENT

Ought I?

BURROWS

You ought to.

THE PATIENT

Really? I beg your pardon.

BURROWS

You worked for me once.

[Dr. Lanfear *signs to* Burrows *to stop.*]

THE PATIENT

Where?

DR. LANFEAR

[*Interposing.*] Never mind.

THE PATIENT

[*To* Dr. Lanfear.] Very likely I did. I've done all sorts of awful things that seem a little hazy now.

BURROWS

Don't you remember meeting me in your son's office one night when you were down on your luck, and abusin' me and wantin' to lick me?

THE PATIENT

[*Smiling.*] Oh! Was that *you?* I thought I'd dreamt it. [*Laughs.*] "Cast-iron" Burrows, eh?

BURROWS

That's me.

THE PATIENT

I'm afraid I was a little rude. I'm so sorry.

BURROWS

You look very different now.

THE PATIENT

I am. [*Pointing to* DR. LANFEAR.] He did it.

BURROWS

You've certainly got *some* son.

THE PATIENT

[*Smiling.*] Haven't I?

BURROWS

[*Suddenly to his wife.*] We're in the way. [*To* DR. LANFEAR.] Drop in this evening if ye've nothin' better to do. I'll give ye a good cigar an' we can have a talk.

DR. LANFEAR

After dinner?

BURROWS

Dine if ye like. 7.30 sharp. Will ye?

DR. LANFEAR

[*Looks at* KATE.] Yes.

BURROWS

[*In* DR. LANFEAR's *ear.*] Ye're all right. Ye'll make some of them high-priced fellows look like 30 cents. Show him to them. [*Points to* THE PATIENT.] Pity ye haven't got a photo of him as he *was! Before* and *after* the treatment! See? An' to think they kept my wife dangling for a year! Damn robbers. [*To* MRS. BURROWS, *patting her hand.*] Come along. [*To* KATE.] Goin' with us?

KATE

Yes.

BURROWS

Very nice of ye. Much obliged. Say — cut out that platform-stuff. Ye don't know how silly a parcel o' women look bellowing about their *rights.* [*To* DR. LANFEAR.] You give her a flea in her ear.

KATE

[*To* DR. LANFEAR.] Really, he's impossible.

DR. LANFEAR

[*Taking* KATE *to his father.*] We're going to be married.

THE PATIENT

[*Looks long at her: takes her hand in both of his.*] Take care of him. He's worth it.

KATE

[*Quite moved.*] You may be sure of that. I love him.

THE PATIENT

Will it be soon?

KATE

[*Quietly.*] Yes. Quite soon.

THE PATIENT

Good luck.

[DR. LANFEAR *takes* KATE *over to* BURROWS, *who is talking to* MRS. LANFEAR *and* MRS. BURROWS. BURROWS, KATE *and* DR. LANFEAR *go to door L.* DR. LANFEAR *opens it.*]

MRS. LANFEAR

[*Stretches out both her hands to* MRS. BURROWS *and takes her hands.*] Thank you. I know what it must have meant to you to tell it.

[MRS. BURROWS *just presses* MRS. LANFEAR'S *hands, wipes her eyes, joins the others at the door, they all*

go out talking, leaving only MRS. LANFEAR *and* THE PATIENT *in the room.*]

[*Puts her hands on her husband's arm and looks up at him.*] It seems too wonderful to believe.

THE PATIENT

Doesn't it! All gone. Sane again. Clean again. A human being again.

MRS. LANFEAR

[*Arranges cushions on Chesterfield.*] Sit here.

THE PATIENT

No. I want to move about. [*Strides around the room.*] Feel the strength of my muscles! The grip of my brain. The demon has left me. I'll sleep to-night. Dreamless sleep. Tired-out sleep. A child's sleep. I'll follow the sun all day to-morrow and plan things. [*With a great breath of relief.*] Oh! Life's good, isn't it?

[DR. LANFEAR *comes in L.*]

MRS. LANFEAR

[*Goes to* DR. LANFEAR *and looks in awe at her husband.*] It's as though some miracle had happened.

DR. LANFEAR

[*Smiling.*] It has.

THE PATIENT

How did you do it? A little while ago in here I was a raving maniac — talking of death. How have you done it?

DR. LANFEAR

That was your last attack. All the poison is gone. You're free of it.

THE PATIENT

I know I am. I feel I am. Everything looks different to me. I *think* differently. [*Thinks a moment.*] Can I stay like this? Always?

DR. LANFEAR

I am sure you can.

MRS. LANFEAR

Will he ever want to go back?

DR. LANFEAR

[*To* THE PATIENT.] Do you now?

THE PATIENT

Certainly not.

DR. LANFEAR

If you had all the drugs in the world right within your reach would you touch them?

THE PATIENT

I don't think so. [*Shudders.*] Do you?

DR. LANFEAR

I'll try you.

THE PATIENT

You needn't.

DR. LANFEAR

[*Points to the hypodermic-syringe and morphine box left by the nurse on the table.*] There. Do you want it?

THE PATIENT

[*Gives a moue of disgust.*] No, I don't want it. [*Shudders.*] Take the filthy stuff away. It cut twenty years out of my life! It will never cost me twenty seconds again. [*Strides strongly up and down.*]

[DR. LANFEAR *and his mother look significantly at each other.*]

I'll soon be in the fight again. In the thick of it. Will they remember Lanfear the jurist?

DR. LANFEAR

Many *do* remember.

THE PATIENT

[*Sadly.*] A new generation has sprung up since.

DR. LANFEAR

In the law one is always young.

THE PATIENT

[*Turns with a keen flash of memory to his wife.*] Do *you* remember the Dodge Case?

[MRS. LANFEAR *nods.*]

You sat all through it.

[*She nods again.*]

I got him off.

[MRS. LANFEAR *smiles and nods.*]

And he was guilty all the time. Absolutely guilty! [*Turns to his son and laughs.*

DR. LANFEAR

Guilty?

THE PATIENT

The guiltiest man I ever had. I've defended a few. He was the worst. But I got him off. [*Laughs gleefully at the remembrance; stands behind a chair, both hands on the back of it: looks back into the past: then speaks forensically and perfectly quietly as though talking to himself.*] "Gentlemen of the jury, this is no ordinary case. You are not trying an ordinary man. You have before you an American citizen, fighting for his life. A man of infinite capacity, unimpeachable integrity and sterling worth. It is your duty in reviewing the evidence to find his guilt or attest his innocence. Frankly I do not know which is right, but with you, gentlemen, to help me, I am confident that we will arrive at a true, a just and an American verdict.

[MRS. LANFEAR *and* DR. LANFEAR *go each side of him.*]

[*Rouses himself as if from a dream: looks at his wife and son.*] I'm going back into harness. Into the fight.

[*Puts both his hands on his son's shoulders.*] Stay with me for a while. Don't leave me — just yet. I want to know I can turn to you — like a sick person. Will you stay by me — for a while?

DR. LANFEAR

Yes.

THE PATIENT

Some day, when the words come I'll — I'll tell you what I feel. Just now — just now — it's — it's not easy. [*Turns away to hide his emotion: moves across and stands a moment by the table. After a few seconds he sees the syringe and the morphine box. He looks at them, then a broad smile creases his features. He takes them up and holds them out to his son.*] Take these away, like a good fellow, will ye?

[DR. LANFEAR *takes the syringe, puts it in his vest pocket and the morphine box into the side pocket of his coat.*]

[*The three people look at each other and laugh happily.*]

THE END OF THE PLAY

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